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*Journal of the National Association  
of Local Government Officers*

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**The Fight is on!**

THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL has lost no time in giving effect to the instruction of Conference "immediately to initiate a campaign with a view to achieving an all-round increase in salaries." Meeting on July 8, three weeks after Conference ended, the Service Conditions committee decided to instruct the staff sides of each of the National Joint Councils upon which the Association is represented to table a claim at the earliest opportunity. The claim was notified to the local government N.J.C. on July 12.

Also, on July 8, the N.E.C.'s public relations committee approved an outline plan of campaign and appointed a campaign committee, which agreed to hold its first meeting on July 28. The campaign itself is expected to begin in October.

It will be clear therefore that, notwithstanding its earlier conviction that continued wage restraint was the wiser policy for NALGO, the N.E.C. is prepared to bow to the will of members so emphatically expressed, and to do all in its power to carry out the mandate entrusted to it.

Our case is a good one. In relation both to the increase in the cost of living and to the earnings of most of their fellow workers, whether manual or "blackcoated," local government officers and their colleagues in the electricity, gas, transport, and national health services, have had a raw deal. Before the war their purchasing power was by no means high. To-day, it is very much lower and it is no exaggeration to say that the majority now form a "depressed" class in the community.

But to say that the case is good does not imply that the struggle will be easy. It will not. Its pursuit to success will call for all the energy, resolution, and enterprise of which we are capable. Nor is it a struggle that can be waged by the N.E.C. alone. In this fight, the greatest yet waged by NALGO, we shall need the wholehearted support of

every district committee, of every branch, and of every member. For, if we are to succeed, we must convince not only the employers of the justice of our case, but also the citizens whose interests we serve, whose contributions, in rates, taxes, and charges, pay our salaries, and who are themselves engaged in a parallel struggle to make ends meet. We must convince them that our work is good, that it is essential to their well-being, and that the improvements we seek will benefit them no less than us. A Conference resolution alone cannot do that. It will be achieved only by hard and unremitting work on the part of every member, in supplying the "ammunition" of facts upon which the campaign must be based, in supporting the activities undertaken by branches, districts, and Headquarters, and in explaining our case, to employers and public.

A campaign of this kind is not free of danger. It would be folly to blind ourselves to the fact that all agitations for pay increases to-day are being seized upon by the Communist party, in the hope of creating dissatisfaction. We should be equally foolish to shut our eyes to the fact that some of those who advocated the campaign at Eastbourne were either acknowledged Communists or fellow-travellers.

That is not to say that the decision of Conference was itself Communist-inspired. It was not. It was demanded by 95,000 votes and there are, we are confident, not 95, much less 95,000, Communists in NALGO. The claim is genuine, put forward by members who, in the main, abhor everything for which modern Communism stands, and would suffer any hardship rather than embarrass the nation in its struggle to defend Western civilisation. But there can be no doubt that the few Communists in our ranks and outside it will attempt, as they have already attempted, to divert the legitimate grievances and demands of members to their own ends. For that reason it is imperative that branches should be on their guard against this danger, keep Communists and Communist propaganda at arms length, and allow no hint or suspicion of ulterior motives to besmirch or misdirect what is a clear, straightforward, and honest policy.

Happily, Conference has cleared the decks. Its overwhelming rejection of the Huntingdon motion, suggesting that NALGO should never have admitted into membership the staffs of the nationalised services and urging that it should now drive them out, has silenced the last whisper of local government isolationism and made it clear, once and for all, that we now stand united—one for all and all for one. Its fundamental agreement on all other major problems before the Association leaves no ground for distracting controversy.

In his powerful and unanimously supported call for the establishment of a Fighting Fund, the Honorary Treasurer gave the Association the slogan "NALGO—ARM NOW." To that, we can now add one even more urgent: "The Fight is On—Let us Go in and Win!"

# LGS

# President's call for service and unity

A stirring call to maintain those ideals of service and unity upon which NALGO was built was made by E.A.S. Young in his presidential address to Conference.

THE FACT that we stand to-day on the threshold—or just over the threshold—of the second half of this twentieth century, said the President; makes it appropriate that I should briefly survey the events of the first half century as they affect our Association, consider our present position, and attempt to look some way ahead.

The first half of the century has been marked by two devastating wars, separated by an uneasy peace and followed by a "cold war" of which we can see no early end. The effects of these upheavals on the world economic situation are only too evident. Only superhuman effort can meet and overcome the tremendous problems they have posed.

Yet, that same period of war and destruction has brought, in science, in medicine, in education, and in social welfare, greater progress than in any comparable period. Simultaneously, there has developed a deeper social consciousness; a greater awareness of the other person and his problems, among individuals, communities, and nations.

As officials in the public social services, we can take pride in our contribution to that progress. To take one example only, in the past half century the death rate among children in their first year of life has been cut to nearly one-fifth of what it was in 1900. In 1948, 775,000 children were born in this country. Had the conditions to-day been the same as fifty years ago, 121,000 of those children would now be dead. In fact, only 26,000 have died. Compared with the year 1900, therefore, we are to-day saving infant life at the rate of nearly 100,000 every year—one in every eight children born.

Despite two world wars, food rationing and shortages of all kinds, we are to-day healthier than we have ever been. We live, on the average, 28 years longer than we did a century ago, and 23 years longer than we lived in the year 1900. We are less crippled by sickness and disease of all kinds. While many influences have shared in that great victory over sickness and death, who can deny that the services for which we are responsible have played the major part?

We recently had a striking example of what those services can do. Three months ago, there was a case of smallpox in Glasgow. Before the disease was detected, 20 more had been infected, and the germs had been let loose in a crowded city. Within an hour of its presence being



diagnosed, the city's health department went into action. Doctors, nurses, sanitary inspectors, and many others worked for 15 hours a day to seal off the outbreak by isolation and vaccination. As a result, not one additional person contracted the infection from those first 20 victims.

Glasgow's battle with smallpox hit the national headlines. Yet it was but one campaign in the day and night struggle against disease, squalor, dirt, ignorance, and social maladjustment in which you are engaged. Were that struggle to cease for a single day, the nation would be plunged into misery and chaos.

That nation-wide progress has been reflected within our own Association. At the beginning of the century, the officials of the local government and public utility services were a depressed class, unorganised, underpaid, lacking personal or economic security. We are accustomed to think of the years before 1914 as the "good old days." But they were not so good for the municipal officer. Let me remind you that NALGO's journal of 1906 recorded the appointment of a junior assistant in a clerk's department at 12s. a week, of a probationer nurse at £12 a year, of a surveyor and inspector of nuisances at £50 a year, of a woman sanitary inspector at £80 a year, of a chief inspector of weights and measures at £120 a year, and of a borough surveyor at £200, out of which princely sum he was required to pay the salaries of his clerical staff.

When our Association was founded in 1905, it had some 8,000 members. To-day it has 190,000 members, and is not only the biggest trade union of black-coated workers in the world, but the eighth largest trade union of any kind in

this country, with a prestige and influence which, in its own sphere, is unrivalled.

I attribute that unbroken growth of NALGO to the fact that the Association has always been able to find men and women willing to shoulder the burden of voluntary service for their fellows. It is to that voluntary service that we owe the NALGO spirit and the prestige we hold. Some fear that that spirit is weakening, and that we can no longer find men and women to take on the ever-increasing labours which work for NALGO imposes. That we have, in the past five years, increased our membership by 42 per cent and the number of our branches from 770 to 1,200 gives the lie to that fear. Of our many achievements—superannuation, compensation for loss of office, national standards of salaries and service conditions in three of the five services we represent, our pioneer work in the fields of education and public relations, our ever-expanding social and welfare activities for our members—one, I think, stands supreme. That is the development, after many years of effort, of a real understanding between ourselves and our employers. This has led, in local government, to the establishment of a complete system of joint negotiating machinery, and to the orderly and progressive solution, on a national scale, of service problems which, 25 years ago, were said to be incapable of such solution. That same system has served as the basis for similar machinery for the electricity, gas, and health services. Whitleyism is the bulwark of our service conditions and our surest hope for further advance. We must guard it jealously, for "Great trees are long in growing, but are rooted up in a single hour."

#### "Britain on a razor-edge"

What of the present and the future? We are faced with two great problems—the service conditions policy we are to follow in face of a continuing national economic crisis and a still rising cost of living; and the streamlining of our Association machinery.

It has been said that, nationally, we are facing an economic situation comparable to our military situation in the darkest days of the war. We knew then that it was necessary for each one of us, at whatever personal sacrifice, to make our maximum effort for victory.

So it is to-day. I believe that Britain is poised on the razor-edge between economic collapse and economic triumph. I believe that, were NALGO members, or any other group of workers, to demand, and to obtain, an all-round increase of pay, the effect—for it could not be limited to one section alone—would be to upset that delicate balance and tilt us into the abyss of inflation. I believe, too, that if we can hold the balance a little longer, we shall be able, as the result of rising production, to resume our upward advance. This, I believe, is the only sound doctrine. I want to get back to the day when a pound will buy a pound's worth of goods, and I believe that we shall get back to that day more quickly if we continue to show restraint now than we should if we joined in the general rush for higher pay.

Let it not be said that this is a policy of standstill. NALGO is far from standing still; indeed, the past year has been one of the busiest and most successful in its history. We have negotiated permanent scales and conditions for electricity staffs. We have helped to form a National Joint Council for gas staffs, have negotiated within it a holidays scheme, and are now completing the negotiation of salaries scales. We have had many successes

in the negotiations for the staffs of the National Health Service. We have helped to form a National Joint Council for the staffs of the docks and inland waterways. In the local government National Joint Council, we have achieved standard gradings for no fewer than eleven groups of officers, secured two additional grades in the Charter scales, raising the minimum to £1,000 a year, improved the sickness scheme, agreed a new and improved scheme for the so-called "Miscellaneous" group of officers, and secured several minor amendments and improvements of the Charter. We have provisionally agreed a big change in the examination provisions, which should give to every officer a better prospect of rising to the highest levels of the service, and have expanded our own Correspondence Institute to help him to do so. We have helped to secure a complete system of superannuation interchange which will allow an officer to move freely between local government, the nationalised services, and the civil service. These achievements are no minor gains. They have brought substantial benefits to large numbers of NALGO members.

#### Unity with flexibility

The negotiations in the various National Joint Councils for the nationalised services illustrate the importance of the need so to reconstruct our Association as to link the various sections of members closely with one another, while giving to each a reasonable freedom in the determination of its own conditions. Although our Association now embraces members in five separate services, each with its own employers and conditions of work, we are still members one of another, and what is done for one service must, in the long run, help the others—provided that, with all our diversities, we remain united. The proposals of the N.E.C. will, I believe, ensure that essential unity, while allowing sufficient flexibility to enable each group of members to pursue its own aims in its own way.

The services to which we devote our lives are in different stages of evolution. Whereas the electricity, gas, and hospital services are each starting a new life in modern dress, while the transport service awaits its new uniform, local government wears still the clothes it was given in 1835 and 1888. Yet, greatly as it needs a new and up-to-date outfit, the tailors cannot agree on the pattern and, until they do, it must be content "to make do and mend." While I share the view that local government is in urgent need of a "new look," I trust that those who design it will not ignore the influences of the past.

Local government has its roots in the people. More than any form of administration we know, it is government of the people, by the people, for the people. It has been built up on the devotion of ordinary folk, giving their time and energy to the service of their fellows. Let us not abandon that common touch in favour of a streamlined but inhuman efficiency. Rather, let us ensure that, whatever changes the future may bring, local government remains local self-government, vigorous, independent, meeting common needs, expressive of the common will.

Of the future of our own Association, I have no doubt. Every day it grows in size, in authority, in influence, and in value to its members. We must continue that steady development. If we face the future with the same resolute spirit of service to the community and to ourselves that we have shown in the past, and if we maintain and further strengthen our essential unity, then at the end of the century NALGO will look back on a record of progress even greater than that in which it rightly takes pride to-day.

# What Conference decided

The more important decisions of Conference are summarised below. For further details, readers should refer to the page numbered in parentheses.

## **IT RESOLVED TO :**

- ★ Reject the salaries policy adopted at the 1949 Conference and initiate immediately a campaign and all other action necessary to achieve an all-round increase in salaries (199).
- ★ Defer decision on the N.E.C.'s scheme for adaptation of Association machinery until the 1951 Conference (200).
- ★ Reiterate its policy, laid down in 1948 but reversed in 1949, to regard the Charter as a minimum (219).
- ★ Approve the new local government examinations scheme, providing for an entrance examination and replacement of the Promotion Examination by a Clerical and a two-stage Administrative Examination (215).
- ★ Support the N.E.C. policy of permitting, with safeguards, a limited retention of officers after pensionable age (211).
- ★ Refund third-class travelling expenses exceeding £3 to members convalescing at Knole Lodge (217).

## **IT TOLD THE N.E.C. TO :**

- ★ Take vigorous action to secure equal pay for equal work, including a national campaign in co-operation with other interested bodies and the encouragement of local campaigns (206).
- ★ Reconsider its decision not to contribute to the production costs of the proposed film on equal pay (207).
- ★ Urge the Government to speed up and improve negotiating machinery in local government, the nationalised services, and industry generally (218).
- ★ Resume negotiations for improved holidays in the local government service (218).
- ★ Discuss with other organisations of non-industrial workers means of obtaining a statutory code on working conditions, similar to that applicable to factories (219).
- ★ Secure a double increment for officers passing the Promotion Examination or its alternative (210).
- ★ Seek amendments to the Charter to secure paid leave for members to attend meetings of provincial councils and similar joint committees (218).
- ★ Seek from the National Assistance Board an assurance that payments to individuals by benevolent funds shall not be deducted from national assistance (217).

★ Present to the 1951 Conference a detailed scheme for revision of NALGO's financial structure (202).

★ Provide more information to members and the Press and expand the volume of public relations amongst and propaganda material for districts and branches (214).

★ Carry out last year's instruction to record in "L.G.S." individual voting by N.E.C. members on major issues and cease to avoid implementing Conference decisions (211).

## **IT REFERRED TO THE N.E.C.**

- ★ Calls for higher annual increments, with, if necessary, amalgamation of salary grades; a scheme of long service increments; a reduction in the number of APT grades and elimination of overlapping; and wholesale amalgamation of APT grades (200).
- ★ Demands for separate salary scales higher than the General Division for qualified shorthand-typists and accountancy machine operators; and for "ability" pay for copy and shorthand typists in the General Division (200).
- ★ Pleas to lower the age at which the maximum of the General Division is reached (200).
- ★ A proposal for a vigorous public relations campaign to convince the public and employing authorities that the present local government General Division scale of salaries is inadequate (200).
- ★ A demand that it should authorise and encourage branches to negotiate local improvements in the Charter (200).
- ★ Application for provincial weighting and extension of the existing London weighting area (200).
- ★ A proposal that employing authorities should be compelled to provide insurance protection for officers exposed to personal injury or injury to their property (221).
- ★ A condemnation of the interim award for education welfare officers, and a demand for a final award (200).
- ★ A proposal that officers studying for examinations should have the option of receiving either financial assistance to help with training expenses or a monetary grant in recognition of success (213).
- ★ Suggestions for early revision of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937 (215).
- ★ A protest at the continued application of local government scales to offices in the national health service (200).
- ★ Restrict membership of NALGO to local government officers (200).
- ★ Fix a time limit for the removal of all Charter anomalies (209).
- ★ Reject national grading as NALGO's future policy (208).
- ★ Recommend grading of local authorities on the basis of population and responsibility, with consequent variations of salary gradings (212).
- ★ Accept national grading as a minimum, giving provincial councils discretion to fix or approve higher gradings within their areas (213).
- ★ Press for an establishment of designated posts and schedules of duties throughout the local government and nationalised services (209).
- ★ Press for equality of grading irrespective of the type of training undergone by the officer (209).
- ★ Seek national grading for rent collectors (213).
- ★ Initiate further action to prevent conscription of local government officers into civil defence (223).
- ★ Press for the exemption of weighting from income tax (220).
- ★ Seek adjustment of the Charter to provide for Saturday morning leave (218).
- ★ Claim one-and-a-quarter plain time rates for *all* overtime (218).
- ★ Urge deletion or amendment of the Charter provision on annual reports (220).
- ★ Urge the deletion or amendment of paragraph 28 of the Charter, under which a General Division officer is not eligible for promotion unless he has passed the Promotion Examination or its equivalent (221).
- ★ Seek recognition of *all* intermediate examinations of appropriate professional bodies as qualifications for promotion from the General Division (210).
- ★ Instruct the N.E.C. to examine the structure, administration, and policy of the British Electricity Authority and area boards (221).
- ★ Reimburse members losing salary through attending Conference and district committee meetings (218).
- ★ Defer opening of July—August bookings for the NALGO holiday centres until March 31 (216).

# EASTBOURNE CONFERENCE

HIGHER SALARIES

N A IL G O  
ARM NOW!

EQUITY



**WHAT IS THE SUBTLE** influence which determines the mood of a Conference, giving it a personality of its own, completely different from the sum of the personalities of those who attend it? Two years ago, discussing the eagerness with which delegates at Bournemouth raced to the microphone to withdraw or reject the host of critical motions they had placed on the agenda, we quoted expert opinion in support of some principle of collective contrariness as a result of which gatherings of clergymen generate an air of arch mischief, of schoolmasters unruly gaiety, of housewives unbridled ferocity, of variety artists grim solemnity—and of local government officers a sweet docility at a time when, individually, they appear to be in a fury of disaffection. Last year, at Aberdeen, we suggested that climate might have something to do with it, and that the cold nor'easter driving North Sea spume through the grey granite streets was responsible for the compensating warmth of affection and unity which infused the proceedings from beginning to end.

But at Eastbourne, neither of these principles held good. The agenda was belligerent, but delegates showed no contrary docility; a Conference which emphatically rejected the policy of the

N.E.C. on the two major issues before it, and on many minor ones, could scarcely be termed docile. The weather was warm and sunny, yet Conference was not, as the Aberdeen precedent might suggest, cold and stormy. It was firm and determined, certainly, sure of its mind and insistent that its will must be obeyed. But it insisted with such good humour, beat the N.E.C. with sticks so gentle, as to leave no sense of conflict behind. And if the nods and becks and wreathed smiles with which the platform responded to every contrary vote be any guide, the N.E.C. almost enjoyed its beating, taking it, not so much like a man (a metaphor suggestive of tight-lipped endurance) as like a dog that wags its tail the more it is chastened.

It was defeated on two fundamental issues; its belief that, in general, the Association should continue to observe wage restraint; and its desire to obtain approval to go ahead with its scheme to adapt the Association's machinery to enable it to deal more effectively with the influx and needs of members in the nationalised services.

On the first, Conference insisted on revising the policy approved at Aberdeen, on rejecting the advice of the Government and the T.U.C., and on embarking at once on a campaign for an all-round

increase in salaries. On the second, the conflict was less acute. There was no real quarrel with the scheme put forward, but merely a desire for more time to consider it, and an insistence on the need to go through the democratic procedure of consultation with branches and members. On both the N.E.C. gave way gracefully, accepting the will of the majority, and pledging itself to carry it out.

## SALARIES DEBATE

### Discussion in camera

The salaries issue came up on the afternoon of the first day, Conference having previously approved a suggestion from the President that the call for an all-round rise should be given precedence over all other motions on salaries.

The debate arose on a motion by Birmingham and Coventry, inviting Conference to reject the "salaries policy" of the Association as adopted at the 1949 Conference and instructing the N.E.C. "immediately to initiate a campaign with a view to achieving an all-round general increase in salaries, and to take such other measures as are necessary to achieve such object." Before this was moved, L. BEVAN, for the N.E.C., proposed that Conference go into private session to consider the motion and amendments to it. It was common practice among trade unions, he said, to go into private session when discussing such matters, so that there could be complete frankness and freedom of speech, both on the floor and from the platform. Spokesmen for the N.E.C. had a greater responsibility than branch representatives, and were the session to be in public, would have to think twice before they spoke.

J. BESSERMAN, Coventry, came to the microphone, apparently to oppose the motion, but delegates, clearly ready to accede to Mr. Bevan's proposal, drowned him with cries of "Vote." After a show of hands, the President declared the motion to go into private session carried. Several delegates rose to demand a card vote, but on the President pointing out that this would probably make it impossible to deal with the issue that afternoon, Conference accepted the decision without further challenge.

Because of it, we cannot report the long and interesting debate which followed. All that can be said is that it took place primarily on an N.E.C. amendment to the Birmingham and Coventry motion, inviting Conference, whilst generally reaffirming last year's decision on service conditions policy, to instruct the N.E.C.

to seek "such increases of salary as may be justified by changing economic circumstances."

After a two-hour debate, the amendment was rejected on a show of hands by, 631 votes to 547. Thereupon, L. BEVAN, for the N.E.C., called for a card vote to enable the Council to judge the strength of the mandate for a change of policy. This resulted in rejection of the amendment by 95,426 votes to 68,048. Since there were 170,144 votes represented by delegates attending Conference, this was equivalent to a 96 per cent. vote, with 56 per cent. voting against the N.E.C. policy, 40 per cent. voting in favour of it, and 4 per cent. not voting.

Conference heard the result of the card vote—announced the following morning—amid loud cheers. There remained six other amendments to the Birmingham and Coventry motion, but these were all either withdrawn or left, and delegates proceeded, without further debate, to adopt that motion by show of hands and with what appeared to be an overwhelming majority.

#### Other claims superseded

This major issue having thus been disposed of, the President pointed out that the agenda contained many items calling for piecemeal improvements, some of which might be regarded as having been covered, or superseded, by the decision to seek an all-round increase. He therefore suggested that Conference should consider whether such motions should be withdrawn or referred to the N.E.C.

From the floor, P. P. ROSENFIELD, N.E.C., suggested that, while delegates appreciated the President's point, a decision should be deferred to give them time to look at the motions which it was suggested should be withdrawn or referred to the N.E.C. They did not want the position to arise whereby next year the N.E.C. could say: "We followed the policy which you wanted us to follow. We have not got you anything under it, and we have not got anything else, either." He therefore moved that consideration be adjourned until a later stage in the proceedings.

#### "Will carry out mandate"

H. D. FERGUSON, *Scottish District Committee*, moved as an amendment that Conference accept in principle the President's proposal, saying "Yes" or "No" to each item as it was read out. Supporting this suggestion, L. BEVAN, N.E.C., said that the N.E.C. had suffered defeat on an issue of major policy. It accepted the decision and would do everything possible to carry out the mandate given to it. He therefore urged that Conference should accept the proposal and refer to it the motions covered by the decision on salaries policy, for consideration on the implementation of that policy.

Conference adopted the amendment, and agreed, on the President's suggestion, that the following motions be referred to the N.E.C.:

By *Brentwood, Burnley, Durham, Glasgow, Seaham, and West Bridgford*, instructing the N.E.C. to seek a reduction of the age at which the maximum of the General Division is reached, together with amendments by *Tottenham, Northants County, Aberdare, Brentwood, Birmingham, Southport, and Paignton and District*, mostly suggesting various ages, ranging from 23 to 28, at which the maximum should be reached.

By *Southport*, instructing the N.E.C. to engage in a vigorous public relations campaign to convince the public and employing authorities that the present General Division scale was inadequate;

By *Glasgow and Northants County*, calling for separate scales of salaries, higher than the General Division, for qualified accountancy machine operators and shorthand typists, together with amendments by *the River Trent Catchment Board, Nottingham Health Services, and Bebington branches*;

By *Middlesex*, calling for additional "ability pay" for copy and shorthand typists in the General Division;

By *Birmingham, Coventry, Glasgow, and Manchester*, seeking provincial "weighting" for large towns and cities and their adjoining areas, with amendments by *Hertfordshire County, Bognor Regis, Cowes, and Mid. and West Herts Hospitals branches*, seeking (a) to extend the "weighting" to holiday resorts and spas, and (b) to extend the London "weighting" to the whole of the area within 30 miles of Charing Cross.

By the *Education Welfare Officers' National Association*, deplored the National Joint Council's interim award for education welfare officers, and pressing for a final award;

By the *Metropolitan Regional Hospitals Board branch*, protesting at the continued application of local government scales to officers in the National Health Service and calling for early opening and speedy conclusion of negotiations for staff transferred to this service;

By *Middlesex*, complaining that salary grades offering only three annual increments do not offer a career to local government officers, and urging negotiations for "conditions of service which offer reasonable prospects."

By *Barking*, seeking higher annual increments, with amalgamation of grades where necessary;

By *Southampton*, calling for presentation to next year's Conference of a scheme for long-service increments applicable to officers in all grades after reaching the grade maximum, with amendments by *Bristol, Paignton and District, and Coventry*;

By *Tottenham*, seeking a reduction in the number of grades, with elimination of overlapping, with amendments by *Lancashire County, and Fulham*, the former calling for a greater range of increments and the latter for the extension of equal

pay to the General, Clerical and Higher Clerical grades.

By *Middlesex*, drawing attention to the higher salary scales offered by the Inland Revenue for district valuers and valuation officers and by the nationalised boards, and pressing for wholesale amalgamation of the A.P.T. grades; and

By *Coventry and Middlesex*, instructing the N.E.C. to authorise and encourage branches to negotiate local improvements to the Charter.

*West Bridgford* branch withdrew a further motion suggesting that the General Division scale be confined to officers entering the service below the age of 21, and that a separate scale, based on the General Division scale but not related to age, be formulated for new entrants aged 21 or over.

#### ADAPTATION OF MACHINERY Special agenda submitted

The second major debate took place on the N.E.C.'s scheme for adaptation of the Association's machinery, designed to increase the efficiency of Conference and the National Executive Council and to give members in each of the five services now covered by NALGO a recognised part in service conditions work and policy. This scheme was summarised in the June "L.G.S.," and each delegate had been supplied with a document setting it out in full, together with a special agenda containing 198 motions upon or suggested amendments to it.

It had been agreed to devote the whole of the Thursday session of Conference to consideration of this special agenda, which was divided into three parts, the first comprising four motions opposing existing policy and calling for consideration of the scheme to be deferred, the second containing motions and amendments calling for approval and alteration of the scheme, and the third containing motions and amendments dealing with the scheme in general but not related to any particular paragraph of it.

#### "Local government staffs only"

Part I of the agenda opened with a *Huntingdonshire* branch motion moved by D. RANSFORD, inviting Conference to regret "the increasing tendency of NALGO to welcome the staffs of nationalised industries to membership," arguing that this must "militate against the interests of the local government officer," and maintaining that the time had arrived for membership to be limited to local authority staffs, excluding the staffs of nationalised industries and other bodies.

His branch, said Mr. Ransford, wanted to shake local government members into awareness of the danger that, within a few years, they might become junior partners in their own organisation. Next year, if the scheme were adopted, some 611 small branches, mainly in local

government, would have no direct representatives at Conference. Few local government officers were interested in electricity affairs. The time had come to return to the position in which the problems before the Conference were understood by all delegates and NALGO once again occupied its traditional place in British trade unionism as the representative of the local government officer.

#### "Form own associations"

G. A. RABY, Norfolk county, withdrawing his own branch's motion which had the same object, seconded the Huntingdonshire motion. Hitherto, he explained, his branch had supported the principle of following those members who had been flung out of local government into the nationalised services and were disorganised. But that was not the position today. Electricity staffs had become well organised and were already "showing NALGO a thing or two."

It was no longer necessary, Mr. Raby went on to argue, for local government officers to make the sacrifices they were being asked to make for these staffs. There was a big difference between the conditions of employment in the local government and the nationalised services, and the staffs of the latter would be well advised to form their own associations. Otherwise, it might be said that NALGO was too busy courting them to look after local government officers. In the health service alone, there was a potential membership of 200,000 nurses, but if they were recruited, the N.E.C. might well be lost in the maze of their gradings and conditions and the local government members would suffer. If the nationalised staffs had separate organisations each would be able to help the other. Therefore, he urged, let each group get on with its own job and try to get 100 per cent. membership. If they tried to go on with this composite organisation they would have chaos.

#### Duty—and benefit

For the N.E.C., E. L. RILEY said that the issue was whether NALGO was to be an all-embracing union or was to throw the staffs of the nationalised undertakings into some other organisation. In 1946, Conference had carried with acclamation his motion to amend the rules to bring those staffs into NALGO. All then agreed that the Association had a duty to protect the interests of their brothers and sisters who were being transferred from local government to the nationalised bodies (*cheers*).

For two days, Conference had been talking about getting common policies and using advances in one service for the benefit of another, and that could best be done in a great, all-embracing union. He was not scared by talk of one section outweighing another, for the good sense of Conference could be trusted to do the right thing at the right time. "Do not let us waste any more time over this

motion," Mr. Riley concluded, amid loud cheers; "let us turn it down out of hand."

It was clear that, on this issue, Conference had made up its mind, and the motion was rejected without further discussion and by an overwhelming majority.

#### Deferment of scheme urged

V. W. J. ROGERS, Ipswich, then moved, in the names of the Bury St. Edmunds, Huntingdonshire, Norfolk county, Ipswich, Poole, and Worsley branches, and the Eastern district committee, that consideration of the scheme be deferred until the 1951 Conference.

There was no ulterior motive behind the motion, Mr. Rogers emphasised, in a sincere and able speech which obviously won both the ear and sympathy of Conference. He was not suggesting delaying tactics to carve the scheme to pieces—he thought the special committee which drafted it had done a good job. But it was unfair to expect branches to consider in less than a month what it had taken the committee nine months to produce (*cheers*). The ordinary members, who did not come to Conference, but relied on delegates to do things for them, had had no opportunity to judge the effect of the scheme on them. The special agenda, with its 21 pages of amendments, had been given to delegates only two days before the debate, and even the President had asked the indulgence of Conference because he had not had time to study it thoroughly. What chance had delegates had to consider the amendments in relation to the N.E.C.'s 47-page report? (*hear, hear!*) Branches and districts should be allowed to sort the problems out, so that next year the N.E.C. would have a document which had received practically unanimous support (*cheers*). At present, delegates had no mandate to vote on the amendments.

#### "No point in hurrying"

"I suggest," Mr. Rogers concluded, amid cheers, "that we should take this document back to our branches and districts and let the N.E.C. have our constructive criticisms, then they can come back to the 1951 Conference with a scheme which has been discussed at branch level and which we hope will stand for some years. There is no point in hurrying. Let us think it over soberly—not at Conference (*laughter*)—and do something worth while, with the full backing of the members of NALGO."

E. G. EUINTON, Eastern district, seconding, protested that the N.E.C. was trying to stampede Conference into a snap decision. "Why," he asked, "should there be so much hurry? It is wrong for the N.E.C. to conceive this and then simply present it to us for approval: it should go through the branches and districts. At the last Conference we were promised that the observations of branches and districts would be sought, but all we got was a simple



"The N.E.C. were trying to stampede Conference into a snap decision."

financial questionnaire, and when we asked when the comprehensive questionnaire was coming we were told that the N.E.C. was aware of all the points which could possibly be raised. You cannot give them your point of view today, because you ought to know what your branches think about these motions and amendments on the agenda."

#### "Not against the N.E.C."

For the N.E.C., E. L. RILEY suggested that, even if Conference wished to defer consideration of the scheme, it ought to hear a statement and explanation from the platform: it was no use delegates going back to branches and districts if they were not fully informed. It would be his last opportunity of explaining what was behind the scheme; and he therefore suggested that Conference should hear his statement before reaching a decision.

Speaking from the floor, A. E. NORTROP, N.E.C., suggested that any statement from the platform should have been made before the motions were taken.

At this point, the President intervened to suggest that, to give members of the special committee an opportunity to explain the report and scheme, Conference should defer further consideration of the motion until it had been through the agenda. Although adoption of this suggestion was moved and seconded from the floor, Mr. Nortrop opposed. Let Conference, he urged, reach a decision on the motion before it, then if, as he hoped, it decided to defer full consideration of the report and scheme for twelve months, let a statement be made, and discussion take place on the pros and cons of the various motions and amendments, so that delegates could tell their branches what had been said, and return to Conference in 1951 with their minds made up (*cheers*). "We are all in the same boat and we all have the same objective," Mr. Nortrop explained. "We are not against the N.E.C., but we want to know that what we agree to will last for some time, and we want to feel sure that we have the membership behind us."

P. ASHEN, N.E.C., said that it would be unfair for Conference to admit a statement from the platform without giving

an opportunity for the expression of different views.

Delegates clearly shared this view, and negatived the President's suggestion that they should go through the agenda, deferring until the end a decision on the motion to postpone consideration for twelve months.

#### Full scheme in "L.G.S."

In their eagerness to make that decision, delegates showed vociferous impatience when R. C. FOYSTER, *Canvey Island*, rose to move his branch's amendment calling for publication of the scheme in full in "L.G.S." so that it might be brought to the attention of all members, and drowned his attempt to make a speech upon it with cries of "agreed!" and "vote!" Bowing to the storm, Mr. Foyster put the amendment formally. Then Conference witnessed an outstanding example of courage as J. H. HUGHES, *Fulham*, a diminutive David barely able to reach the microphone, dared to defy the shouting Goliath before him by opposing its evident intention.



"This," he shouted, amidst the uproar, "is simply a delaying tactic of the kind which has earned NALGO the name of the 'Tea and Bun Club.' You are trying to put the clock back. What are you afraid of? My branch feels that if this adaptation of our machinery is not carried out, NALGO will become an out-dated organisation. The N.E.C. has done a good job, and if this scheme is carried out, it will enable the Association to take a foremost place among the trade unions affiliated to the T.U.C."

Amid renewed cries of "vote!" the President put the Canvey Island amendment, which was carried. No speaker coming forward to move a *Southend-on-Sea* amendment proposing a special Conference in six months' time, excited delegates were at last able to settle the issue, adopting the motion by an overwhelming majority, amid loud cheers. The effect, as explained by Mr. Riley, was that Conference postponed a decision on the scheme until 1951, but agreed to consider it without committing itself to anything.

Thereupon, Mr. Riley made the statement introducing the scheme which he had intended to make had Conference agreed to go through the special agenda. Dealing first with the criticism that branches and districts had not been consulted, he recalled that, at Aberdeen a year ago, the Hon. Treasurer had said that a questionnaire on the financial side of the future structure of the Association would be helpful, and he had indicated that the N.E.C. might have to consult branches by means of another questionnaire. After the Aberdeen Conference, the N.E.C. formed a special committee, which, starting from scratch, had first to devote much time to the background of the Association's historical development, war-time experience, immediate post-war changes, and the effect of the development of the nationalised services.

#### A representative committee

The committee did consider sending out a questionnaire, but, as the work proceeded, found that much information was already available at Headquarters, in branch and district returns. Moreover, the committee was itself representative of the country as a whole, and its members had wide experience of all types and sizes of branches and districts, as well as of the N.E.C., Headquarters, and NALGO affairs generally. It was also felt that to raise matters of policy in a questionnaire might lead to branches and districts making up their minds before hearing the case and prejudice the right of Conference to determine policy. For these reasons, when a questionnaire was issued, it was confined to questions of fact, the answers to which were not obtainable in any other way. The response—about 50 per cent—was not as good as they had hoped, but was sufficient to allow the committee to reach certain tentative conclusions.

Since the committee was required to report to this year's Conference, time was all-important. Despite long sessions and week-end meetings, it was not until April 16 that the report was completed. Branches had had about four weeks to look at it and, despite the complaint of insufficient time, had submitted about a hundred amendments in little over two weeks.

#### Three years delay

The report did not attempt to settle detail. All they were asked to consider was the broad lines of policy. Any changes would not have been operative for two years and the decision just taken meant that they would not be operative for three years. Had Conference approved the principles, it was proposed, during the coming year, to ask the N.E.C. committees to consider the details, and report to next year's Conference, after which branches and districts would have had a full twelve months to consider proposed changes in rules and everything else, and to put down amendments for the following Conference.

The scheme, Mr. Riley continued, had been overwhelmingly endorsed by the N.E.C., and he knew of nobody who was opposed to it *in toto*; it was only on certain sections that there were disagreements.

The special committee felt that certain principles must be maintained. Of these, the first was that NALGO should continue broadly on its present lines of organisation—and Conference had settled that already. The various groups of membership had so much in common that it would be foolish to exaggerate differences by splitting up into sections. They should use the "Co-op" motto: "Our members own these stores and receive the profits."

#### Problem of small branches

Secondly, if the first principle were agreed, it followed that Conference, the N.E.C., and district committees, must follow the same pattern as at present.

Thirdly, there must be a realistic approach to the problem of representation of small branches at Conference and district committees.

Fourthly, all must loyally accept the implications of membership of a great, all-embracing trade union. Constitutional machinery must operate, and they could not maintain indefinitely bodies which were outside both national and district constitutions. All who were in NALGO must be of NALGO, and submit at all stages to the working of a democratic organisation: the proper chain of responsibility—branch, district, N.E.C. and Conference—must be strengthened and maintained.

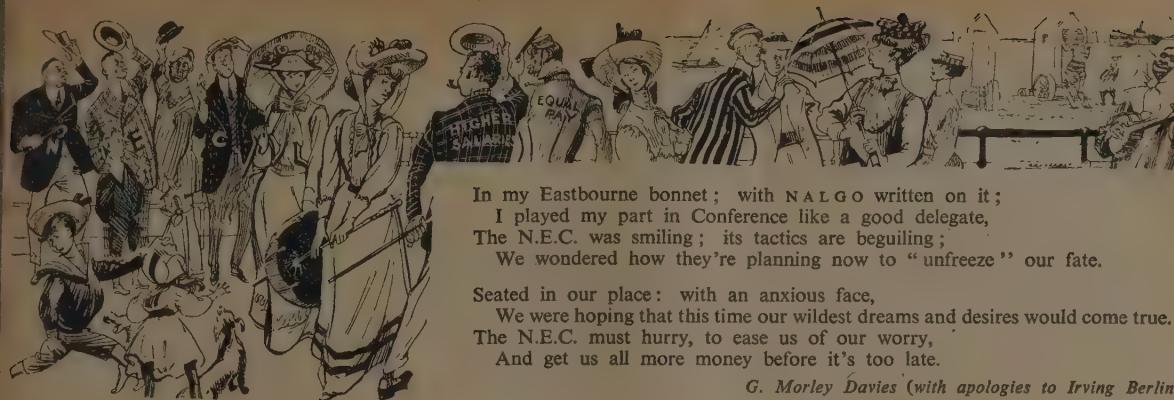
"You can now," Mr. Riley concluded, "consider what I think is a very good document (*cheers*). I am very proud of the committee over which I presided. I stuck my neck out by taking on this job; I was told that I was in grave danger of bringing myself in conflict with Conference, just as I was about to be 'kicked upstairs.' I do not believe that. We have done a job of work, and, even if it is not wholly acceptable, it was my and my committee's duty to do it (*cheers*).

Conference then began a detailed discussion of the scheme. Since, however, the report of this discussion can be intelligible to readers only if they have the scheme itself before them, we have decided to postpone its publication until we are able, in fulfilment of the earlier decision of Conference, to publish the document in full. That will be done in the September "L.G.S."

#### £500,000 RESERVE FUND Honorary Treasurer's call

Apart from the adaptation of machinery, the scheme included a section on finance, in which it was proposed that the Association should build up, over a period of ten years, a reserve fund of £500,000 by means of annual contributions of £50,000 from subscription revenue, beginning next year. Introducing

## EASTBOURNE PARADE



In my Eastbourne bonnet ; with NALGO written on it ;

I played my part in Conference like a good delegate,

The N.E.C. was smiling ; its tactics are beguiling ;

We wondered how they're planning now to "unfreeze" our fate.

Seated in our place : with an anxious face,

We were hoping that this time our wildest dreams and desires would come true.

The N.E.C. must hurry, to ease us of our worry,

And get us all more money before it's too late.

*G. Morley Davies (with apologies to Irving Berlin).*

this, J. H. ROBINSON, the Honorary Treasurer, expressed disappointment that the decision to defer consideration of the adaptation scheme until next year's Conference meant postponing the subject of finance for a further twelve months. While he appreciated that branches and delegates had had little time to consider the implications of the scheme in respect of service conditions and organisational structure the financial problem was not new. Each year recently there had been motions on the Conference agenda stressing the need to revise subscription income, while he had himself pleaded at successive Conferences for a strong and liquid reserve fund.

Whilst he had tried to reconcile the position of an army deciding on Tuesday to go to war and on Thursday deciding to have the ammunition in thirteen years' time (*laughter*), there was a golden lining because, presumably, if delegates agreed with him, they would be prepared to act as his agents throughout the country in giving the reasons to members unable to come to the Conference, and who, perhaps, might misjudge the issue.

### 7s. a head in reserve to-day

In his statement on the Association's accounts (reported on page 205), Mr. Robinson reminded Conference, he had said that, while NALGO had reached a stage where it was getting the maximum revenue, it had perhaps not quite reached the maximum expenditure, and that the best he could foresee for the immediate future was a revenue account balancing itself, with perhaps a little contribution to the reserve fund, but no possibility of constituting a super-reserve fund.

"I told you," he continued, "that after forty-five years of industrious activity, NALGO had accumulated £76,000—about seven shillings a nob—as a reserve fund. I pointed out that there were 416 trade unions which felt, acting individually, that they should have an average reserve of about £7 per head, at least, and I said that if they were right, we must be wrong.

"When the Special Committee came to consider the financial side, whatever differences of opinion there had been in regard to structure and organisation disappeared completely. There was—not by my prompting—complete unanimity on the necessity of a reserve fund, and the figure of £500,000, to be accumulated in ten years, was not my proposition. I accept it, because it does two things : it gives us a large sum of money, and it gives it over a period of time that cannot cause serious inconvenience to our hard-pressed pockets.

### "Cheap at the price"

"What does this £500,000 mean ? If it was ours, as individuals, we should think that it was an extremely large sum. We are thinking, however, in terms of 200,000 members. If we asked for the whole £500,000 this year, it would have meant £2 10s., or about 1s. a week, from each member. We do not ask you for that ; we ask for £500,000 over ten years ; we ask for this fighting fund at the rate of one penny a week. (*A delegate : "Cheap at the price."*) Yes, cheap at the price.

"Why have a fund ? I have been preaching reserve funds ever since I came to NALGO. I have never had at the back of my mind the thought that this fund was for new offices. I told you—and I think that to some extent you agreed—that we relied for holding on to what we have, and for gaining that to which we think we have a right, on joint negotiation. Since then, a very eminent gentleman, not a member of NALGO, has described joint negotiation to me as persuasion, promises, procrastination, and postage stamps (*laughter*). If there is a grain of truth amongst the chaff, it is a serious indictment of what strength we have and of the resources which we have to retain what we have got and to gain what we want. I said that we ought to have this money for defence, presuming that, at some time, there might be some attack on what we have obtained, or on what our fathers obtained for us.

"When you go to your branches, ask them to consider what we have gained and what we might lose if we came up against downright aggression. There is the superannuation fund, which guarantees us security for old age, and, if we predecease our wives, security for them. There is the fund which, if we are unfortunately struck down in middle age, will give us a competence without relying on state assistance or social welfare. There is the sickness pay, which will enable us to suffer bodily illness without mental anxiety. There is the security which, while it does not say that we shall have a job in the town hall until we are sixty-five, does enable us to do our job without fear of faction or pull of party. There are all the conditions which enable us to give to our fellow citizens what adds to their material well-being. Those are some of the things we might risk losing.

"It has been said that, if we came to such an emergency, we could appeal to our members, and that we should be inundated with money. I am not sure that that is so, or is desirable—but I ask you to mention to your colleagues in districts and branches the things which I have mentioned and to ask them whether they are worth fighting for and whether a penny a week is too much.

### "Consider the 'enemy'"

"You have decided to launch a campaign. It is not a question of merely entering into negotiations ; it is to be a campaign. Just consider for a moment the enemy—if I may use that quasi-military term. You have a well-informed and well-organised enemy, one who has ample information not only on his own position but also on yours, and who has unlimited financial backing. If you are driven ultimately, either in defence of what you enjoy or to gain that which you have a perfectly clear and moral right to expect, to take the last step of organised labour and to call on the solidarity of your members, whether in this place or that place, this group or that group, these men or those—not necessarily the men

who are suffering the injustice, but because that is the tactical battlefield which you have chosen—at least you must be able to say: 'Do as we ask, and you shall not suffer financially in the doing' (*cheers*).

"At that time, you have to be able to go to the bank and say: 'Here are these securities; we will have the cash now.' The response to an appeal at that moment would not have the same effect. The fact that you have these resources, and that other people who are interested in where you stand know that you have them, may be the means of preventing your ever having to use them (*cheers*).

#### "NALGO, arm now!"

"I can sympathise with some of your difficulties. I am speaking now without verbal quip or subtle innuendo, but in all sincerity, and I say to you, asking you to pass these words on: 'NALGO, arm now!' (*cheers*). In 1947 or 1948, I said: 'Let no cause be neglected, no struggle abandoned, and no battle lost, because we lack the finances to wage it to a successful conclusion.' I repeat that warning, and I add that the time may be shorter than you think."

The vociferous cheers which acclaimed this speech made it clear that Mr. Robinson had delegates with him to a man. His only questioner, indeed, rose not to criticise, but to seek more detail. This was G. E. TICKNER, Wandsworth, who, after declaring that he would gladly act as the Treasurer's agent in broadcasting his call to members, sought additional facts with which to convince them that an increase in subscriptions of between 20 and 30 per cent. was justified. Personally, said Mr. Tickner, he thought it was, but it was necessary to persuade others to the same view. By how much, he asked, did the N.E.C. think subscriptions should be increased; what percentage of the higher rate was it suggested that branches and districts should retain; and should branches follow the example of the Council and build up reserve funds of their own?

#### Early action urged

Further, information about how branches were financed, how they stood financially, and what their balances were like, would be helpful. What was it proposed to spend on new Headquarters' premises? Could details be given of the reserves—and also the establishment charges and running costs—of other trade unions, so that they could be quoted to branches and members?

F. SHEPPARD, Kingsclere and Whitchurch, suggested that, in view of what Mr. Robinson had said, it would be wrong to postpone consideration of higher subscriptions until 1952. Would it be possible, he asked, to amend the decision to defer consideration of the adaptation scheme in such a way that the N.E.C.'s detailed recommendations for higher subscriptions might be submitted to next year's Conference?

To this, Mr. Robinson replied that his only doubt about the financial aspect had been whether ten years—which really meant twelve—was not too long a period in which to accumulate the proposed reserve fund. Now, Conference had pushed it back a further year.

#### Effective in 1952

"You are the parliament of the Association," he continued, "and you need not be tied too much by rules and regulations; it is your will that counts. I therefore make this suggestion. This scheme divides itself into two major parts, the constructive or administrative part and the financial part. You are receiving next year the administrative part, and then it will have to be implemented. The financial part could have stood alone, and, if there had been no necessity to change the administration, sooner or later you would have had to consider the financial part.

"If you were so minded, I think you could instruct the Council to bring the administrative scheme before Conference next year for consideration, allowing the details to be worked out in the year after that, but on the financial part only you could instruct it to bring forward next year the details of how it would be worked out. Then, in 1951, Conference would either approve it or amend it, but at the next Conference the operation of the financial part could almost immediately be effective. If you asked us to do that, we could do it; but you must ask us."

That, said Mr. Sheppard, was precisely what he had in mind, and he would therefore like to move that the financial section of the scheme be adopted now.

Mr. Robinson, however, intervened to point out that that was not quite what he had suggested. "My suggestion," he explained, "was that you should not depart from what you did this morning,

but that you should instruct us, when presenting the financial part of the report, to give the working details, so that you can see not only the scheme, but how it will work."

The President thereupon put the motion: "That Conference adopt the suggestion made by the Honorary Treasurer." This was immediately seconded by A. E. NORTROP, N.E.C., who had earlier so strongly called for deferment of the adaptation scheme. The feeling against adoption of the scheme as a whole, he emphasised, was not directed against its financial proposals; they did not want to rock the boat in such a way as to ship water on the financial side. He was certain that all the branches and districts which voted for the resolution that morning would be in favour of the present motion. Delegates promptly endorsed this claim by approving the motion unanimously.

#### "Ammunition" for Branches

It only remained for E. L. RILEY, as chairman of the Special Committee, to voice its thanks to Conference for listening so courteously to the explanations of the Council and for making valuable contributions which would be considered carefully in the coming months; and to the general secretary and his staff for the help they had given to his committee. To this A. H. AUBERTIN, N.E.C., added on behalf of himself and the special committee, an expression of appreciation of the patience and kindness shown by Mr. Riley.

Finally, Mr. Robinson assured delegates that if they, or their branches, felt that reasonable financial information would help to persuade members that the action on which Conference had decided was right and would write to Headquarters, the financial officer, or he himself, would give them the ammunition.

There remained two N.E.C. motions which, though related to the Adaptation Report, called for immediate action. The first authorised the N.E.C., pending a final decision on representation, to determine the basis on which delegates should be appointed to the 1951 Conference, and the second "froze" the N.E.C. at its present size, notwithstanding any increase in membership. Both were adopted.

#### MAYOR'S WELCOME

"All servants of public"

Conference had been opened by the Mayor of Eastbourne, Alderman R. J. S. CROFT, J.P., who welcomed the delegates to a town, of which, he said, its citizens were proud. As a layman in local government, he did not intend to tell the experts how to do their job, but, being himself a member of a staff association, he thought it essential that the strength of a movement should be built up on the basis of what the members put into it rather than what they hoped to get out of it. "We are all of us, in our respective spheres, servants of the public," he went

#### BRANCH MAGAZINE PRIZEWINNERS

*Winners of the 1949 branch magazine competition, announced at the Conference meeting of editors, were:*

##### Printed Magazines

1. Camera Principis, Coventry (editor, J. A. Yates);
2. Current News, Northmet (editor, G. H. Chapman).

##### Duplicated Magazines

1. Arbekay, Kensington (editor, G. W. Herrick);

2. Calling Croydon, Croydon (editor, L. J. A. Moir).

*New Magazines first published in 1949*  
*Printed, Tudorose, Westminster (editor, J. C. Sutcliffe);*

*Duplicated, Nalgopinion, Bridlington (editor, T. A. Brigham).*

After the President had presented certificates and book tokens to winning editors, G. W. HERRICK, editor of "Arbekay," delivered a paper on "Planning Ahead," a copy of which has been sent to every editor.

on, "and I hope that that will never be forgotten by your Association" (*cheers*).

After thanking the Mayor and Mayoress for their presence and for the hospitality they had already accorded delegates, the President called upon R. T. SHEARS, chairman of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund Committee, to announce the winners of the trophies and diplomas for 1950. In doing so, Mr. Shears told Conference that, although the subscription income of the Fund for 1949—£37,000—was the highest ever recorded, there had been a small deficit, and he appealed to all to help put that right. Only 75 per cent, of NALGO's members contributed, and there were 16 branches which gave nothing at all. If the proportion of subscribers could be increased to 90 per cent, there would be no fear of another deficit. The Fund was often the only gleam of light for a widow in her darkest hour, and in the past 30 years had distributed more than £400,000 to widows, orphans, and others in need.

#### Presentation of Trophies

The Mayoress then presented silver trophies to the following three districts with the highest average contribution per member:

SIR HOMEWOOD CRAWFORD Shield—  
North Eastern District (£2,236; 4s. 8d. per member).

VISCOUNT WAKEFIELD Shield—North Western District (£6,947; 4s. 7d. per member).

BRIDLINGTON Cup—South Wales District (£1,736; 4s. 1d. per member).

Contributions from other districts were: Eastern, £2,199 (3s. 11d.); East Midland, £2,398 (3s. 8d.); Metropolitan, £6,163 (4s.); Scottish, £2,488 (3s. 4d.); South Eastern, £2,489 (3s. 11d.); Southern, £1,913 (3s. 7d.); South Western, £2,202 (3s. 11d.); West Midland, £3,424 (3s. 9d.); Yorkshire, £3,261 (3s. 7d.).

Eleven branches received Diplomas of Merit in recognition of raising more than £1,000 for the Fund since they first began to collect. They were: Carmarthenshire, £1,101; Newcastle (Staffs), £1,099; Hendon, £1,055; London C.C., £1,052; Westminster, £1,043; Fife, £1,025; Leigh (Lancs), £1,024; Crosby, £1,016; Shoreditch, £1,007; Wakefield, £1,007; Edmonton, £1,005.

Special mention was also made of the following branches whose contributions during 1949 reached or exceeded a further £1,000: Liverpool, £9,614; Stoke-on-Trent, £7,346; Glasgow, £5,268; West Riding, £4,126; Birmingham, £3,250; St. Helens, £3,194; Stockport, £3,164; Plymouth, £3,032; Brighton, £3,013; Blackburn, £2,254; Middlesex, £2,214; Gloucestershire, £2,107; Walsall, £2,064; Southend-on-Sea, £2,046.

#### TREASURER'S REVIEW NALGO's rising costs

After the President's Address, which is reported on page 196, delegates heard J. H. ROBINSON, the Association's honorary treasurer, move the adoption of the annual financial statements and balance sheet. Last year, he reminded them, he had commented that, contemplating the lot of the local government officer, the grey binding of the Annual Report was not

inappropriate. "This year," he went on, "it is similarly symbolically tinted, but the grey is a little deeper; and unless there is some marked improvement in his lot, I suspect that, next year, it will be bound in black" (*laughter*).

In discussing the accounts, he proposed to start with the Benevolent and Orphan Fund, then go on to the earlier part of the accounts. This was for two reasons: first, it would be following the example of the local government officer in going steadily backwards (*laughter*), and secondly, because there was, for the first time on record, a deficit on the Benevolent Fund. That had resulted from the transfer of £4,674 loss from Knole Lodge, the Association's convalescent home, but, even without that, this year's surplus would have been only £6. The latest ascertained cost of the convalescent home was £6 18s. 9d. a head a week, whereas the charge was £4 4s. Every person who went to Knole Lodge, therefore—including the husbands and wives of convalescents—was, without his knowledge, and perhaps against his wishes, being subsidised by the B. & O. Fund. The budgets of local government officers to-day left little room for generosity—but they could give service: work an hour's overtime and give the half-crown to the Fund. If 160,000 people were to give half-a-crown each, it would mean £20,000, and make all the difference.

#### Administration expenses up

Of the two holiday centres, Croyde had a surplus of £2,173, while Cayton showed a deficiency of £945. One reason for that was the greater cost of salaries at Cayton—but the responsible committee had taken steps to make the two camps more comparable in this respect. With a loss of only £289, he thought that the committee had kept within the N.E.C.'s principle of running the holiday centres on a self-supporting basis and he congratulated it.

Turning to the cost of administration, Mr. Robinson compared the 1949 figures with those of 1947—comparable years with no windfalls or nest-eggs in either. In 1949, Headquarters' organisation cost £164,304, an increase of £45,811, or 38 per cent, over 1947. The increase was 41 per cent on salaries and superannuation, 26 per cent on office accommodation, and 33 per cent on general office expenses. £35,205, or 76 per cent of the increase had gone to the parent body, and £10,193, or 23 per cent to the ancillaries. Membership had increased by 18,301 in those two years, and he knew that those gentlemen who would like to see the sphere of NALGO expand until it was bounded on the north by the Aurora Borealis, on the south by the Milky Way, on the east by the Precession of the Equinoxes, and on the west by the Day of Judgment (*laughter*) would feel that this was a step in the right direction.

Income to the General Fund—the life-blood of the Association—was up by 24 per cent. Of the 38 per cent overall increase in expenditure, most had gone on purely



"Five friendly trade unions shared two rotating seats."

trade union activities: office accommodation, and travelling expenses and allowances, were up by 100 per cent; and Conference, Council, committee, and other expenses by 54 per cent. Whitley Council expenses, however, had risen by only £3,115, or 52 per cent—much less than he had thought likely two years ago. Whitley Council work was, he considered, run very economically, though not, perhaps, with the economy mentioned in the paragraph of the Annual Report dealing with the staff side of the National Joint Council for the gas industry, which told them that the T. & G.W.U., A.S.S.E.T., A.Sc.W., C. & A.W.U., A.E.S.D., and the Gas Engineers' Guild—all, presumably friendly trade unions—"shared two rotating seats" (*laughter*). That seemed to him to be economy carried to the last extreme, though he would not like delegates to think that the spectacle of a lot of gentlemen going round in circles and getting in each others' way represented Whitley machinery in motion (*laughter*).

The net loss on the Correspondence Institute had increased by £1,351—about 100 per cent—but the Council had arranged a new scale of fees and, although it would be some time before the effect of the changes was felt, the intention was to make it as far as possible self-supporting.

#### "L.G.S." not for burning

The cost of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE had gone up by £6,947, in the two years and he was pleased to find that the resolutions on previous Conference agendas, inferring that the journal, and presumably the editor and staff, should be consigned to the public hangman for burning, seemed to have disappeared this year. "Either," he conjectured, "the people who used to put down these motions have given up the struggle, or they feel, as I do, that it is a jolly good paper" (*hear, hear*). He would be pleased to contribute to it if he had anything to say—although such reticence was not confined to all its correspondents.

A surplus of £15,923 had been carried forward this year, and delegates might think that that was very good, but, in 1947, £39,779 had been carried to reserve, so that there had been a "loss of profits" of £23,856. That, plus £34,217 in-

creased income, showed that the cost of running the trade union side of NALGO had increased by over £58,000. The total cost was now about £160,000 a year. This year's surplus had done nothing at all to improve the liquidity of the Balance Sheet, since they had had to buy more property, and to write off an overdraft.

"Last year," said Mr. Robinson, "I told you that NALGO as a trade union had changed in front of your eyes. The year before, I told you that, having got the members—we recruited 34,000 in the two years before 1947—we now had to deliver the goods. This year, I present you with the bill for delivering part or the whole of the goods to date.

"My eternal complaint since 1946 has been the absence of liquid reserve funds. You may say that I have a bee in my bonnet. Well, let this be my answer and apology: I have here a statistical summary of 416 registered trade unions for the ten years, 1938-48. The membership of those unions at the end of the period was nearly 8,000,000, and had grown 100 per cent in ten years. NALGO has nearly done the same. Their income increased by 100 per cent; so did that of NALGO. Their working expenses increased by 100 per cent, while NALGO's increased by 150 per cent. The significant fact, however, is that the reserve funds of these unions—which have not been acting in concert, but each following its own bent—"have increased from about £20,000,000 to £54,000,000, or two-and-a-half times, whereas NALGO has not increased its reserve fund once. If those 416 unions feel that £7 a head is necessary, why are we content with 7s? Where are our advantages against theirs?

#### "You have much to lose"

"I am approaching the end of my service life," he concluded, "and I have seen great changes. I tell you that, whatever you have to gain, you have much to lose, and I ask you this; how do you propose to hold that which you have got if you come up against forces which would try to put you back to the conditions which I can recall and to which the President has referred? Would you do it by public opinion? No, because public opinion is envious and often misinformed. Would you do it by the public representative? No, because he, in spite of or against his inner conscience, will always sacrifice you to expediency. By Acts of Parliament? No; eternal vigilance is necessary there. By the departments' of the State? No, because they would make us all subservient to themselves. By the power and appeal of the press? No, because the standard there is often that which suits the moment. By the righteousness of your cause? No, because it is only in melodrama that justice and right triumph in the end.

"You have built up your present position and have got what you have on the

basis of the efficacy of joint negotiation between men of good will, on the sense of fair play and common decency, on the belief in the value of the submission of differences to negotiation and discussion. But what if this fails? Am I alone in thinking, and am I wrong in saying, that sometimes I do detect a distant sign, a faint cloud here, a slight murmur there, which warns me to be careful, lest all that was born in the spirit of compromise may perish in feud and antagonism. Think on this. If the power of the persuasive word fails you, what other weapons have you?" (*prolonged cheers*).

#### CONFERENCE PROCEDURE

##### New standing orders

After carrying with acclamation a vote of thanks to the honorary treasurer, moved by C. W. COAD, *Devon County*, Conference returned to the agenda to consider a new standing order, moved by G. LLEWELYN, for the N.E.C., providing that, should the President not have been inducted by 4 p.m. on the last day of the Conference, all outstanding business, other than votes of thanks, should then stand referred to the N.E.C. to allow the ceremony to take place. The intention, he explained, was to make permanent the successful experiment made at Aberdeen, as a result of which the induction of the President had been carried out more impressively than ever before.

To this, *Hertfordshire* had submitted an amendment suggesting, as an alternative to automatic reference to the N.E.C. of unfinished business, that such items should be called over and Conference be given the opportunity of voting on them. Moving this, E. G. SWAN said that his branch wished to avoid the risk of referring matters which delegates had come from all parts of the country to discuss. But upon Mr. Llewelyn pointing out that, since this procedure would not stop discussion after 4 p.m., it would defeat the object of the motion, Conference rejected the amendment, and the motion was adopted.

#### N.E.C. policy sought

Mr. Llewelyn then moved a further N.E.C. motion designed to entitle a delegate to move, without notice, at any stage of Conference, that, immediately after a motion had been called, the N.E.C. should announce whether it supported or opposed it and any amendments thereto.

To this, A. BROOK, *Tynemouth*, moved an amendment designed to provide that, before circulating the preliminary agenda, the N.E.C. should send to each branch a statement of its policy for the next twelve months. Mr. Llewelyn had dismissed this amendment as irrelevant, on the ground that the Council did indicate its policy by the motions it put on the preliminary agenda: to do more would mean approving a statement of policy in December, six months before Conference. If this argument were correct, said Mr. Brook, it would appear that

the whole policy of the N.E.C. this year was contained in amendments to the constitution, which were the only items it had tabled for the preliminary agenda. Adoption of his proposal, he continued, would save the time of Conference by giving branches an indication of the N.E.C.'s attitude on salaries and service conditions before the agenda went out, and would help to bridge the gap between the N.E.C. and members. Conference, however, rejected the amendment, adopting the motion.

It likewise approved a proposal submitted by J. BURN'S for the *West Midland district committee* that, where, in preparing the agenda, the agenda subcommittee had converted a motion submitted by one branch into an amendment to another motion, withdrawal of the motion should not result in the amendment being dropped without consideration.

#### EQUAL PAY CALL

##### "Maximum effort" urged

These preliminaries out of the way, Conference turned to detailed consideration of the Annual Report, formally moved by G. LLEWELYN, chairman of the Council, and the motions based upon it. First item to come under fire was paragraph 9, recording the action taken by the N.E.C. to give effect to the instructions of last year's Conference that it must press "with maximum effort" to secure equal pay for men and women doing equal work in all grades of the local government Charter, and carry out, with other interested bodies, a national and local campaign for equal pay. The report stated that NALGO representatives on the staff sides of the various national joint councils had been instructed to press for equal pay on all suitable occasions; that the Association had for years striven to secure equal pay, both on its own and in association with other bodies; that it had approved the widespread circulation of a pamphlet on the subject, and circulated information to the staff sides of provincial and district councils; and that it had sent, through branches, a questionnaire to all candidates in the General Election. At the same time, it warned members of the difficulties of achieving equal pay at present, pointing to the objections raised by the Government and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to the decision of the T.U.C. that a further approach to the Government would be inappropriate at the moment.

This was not enough for the women members, whose first protagonist, MISS PAT TAYLOR, L.C.C., leaped to the attack with a *'Metropolitan District'* motion calling upon Conference to reaffirm its policy and upon the N.E.C. to "take vigorous action in all appropriate quarters" to secure the implementation of this policy. A motion on these lines, said Miss Taylor, had always been treated as one of the less serious proposals before Conference, which had tended to regard

the debate on it as a consolation prize for the women delegates.

"Year by year," she complained, "we have been given enthusiastic support, with a sudden spurt of interest in the spring, when the thoughts of the N.E.C. turn lightly to the Conference agenda, but the same old mush, with minor variations, is served up in the Annual Report. We are told that it is unrealistic to ignore the difficulties. There is a welcome suggestion—but no more than a suggestion—of constant and unremitting agitation, but there have been no signs that this has started yet. However, one never knows; constant stoning may even yet wear away the drips on the platform" (laughter).



"Constant stoning may wear away the drips."

After the motion had been formally seconded, a courageous male, T. C. POWELL, Devon County, moved to dilute the motion by substituting the words "make this reaffirmation known" for "to secure the implementation of this policy."

#### "Substantial progress made"

Supporting the motion on behalf of the N.E.C., MISS M. TOWNSON, chairman of the equal pay sub-committee, assured Conference that the Council wanted to take vigorous action and to intensify its work throughout the country. In this it would welcome the widest participation by district committees and branches. It had co-operated with similar bodies and women's organisations. Its new leaflet had been delayed by printing difficulties, but was now ready and was to be sent to all employers' and trade union representatives on all the national joint councils, to local authorities, and to employing bodies in the gas, electricity, and national health services.

While it would be futile to ignore the economic difficulties, the N.E.C. favoured constant and unremitting agitation, so that there should be no avoidable delay in securing equal pay. Substantial progress had, in fact, been made; the principle of equal pay was more widely applied in the local government, electricity, and national health services than in the civil service; in the local government and national health services, women enjoyed the same rates as men in the A.P.T. grades, while in the electricity supply industry, the higher clerical, administrative and commercial staffs had equal pay. In addition, the new local government miscellaneous scales applied equally to men and women.

The N.E.C. opposed the Devon amendment, Miss Townson said, because it weakened the motion. Conference agreed, rejecting the amendment and turning to another, by Glasgow and the Scottish district committee. This sought to strengthen the motion by instructing the N.E.C. to "carry out immediately a national campaign on the broadest possible lines, in co-operation with all other interested bodies, especially trade unions"; and to "give the utmost practical assistance to district committees and branches to encourage them to carry out similar campaigns at local level."

#### "60,000 women are determined"

Moving the amendment, MISS MARGARET HAMILTON, Glasgow, said that some women felt that equal pay would never be secured until the women themselves conducted a campaign for it. That they were prepared to do. There were 60,000 of them in NALGO, and 60,000 women who had waited 20 years for equal pay could give the Association and the N.E.C. a tough time. The N.E.C., she alleged, did not really believe in the equality of men and women and therefore in the need to give them equal pay. Every year, a motion like this was passed, and every year it did nothing about it. It had not organised a national campaign in which all branches could co-operate. If a particular branch did not co-operate, the N.E.C. should get women from a neighbouring branch to help. Those 60,000 women were determined to have a campaign. The first step was to get more women on the N.E.C.

Seconding, MISS H. M. MONAGHAN Dunbartonshire, emphasised the importance of "practical help" for branches and districts. That meant action. It was not enough for the N.E.C. to appoint a sub-committee: it must translate Conference resolutions into action. Economic circumstances must not be allowed to override the principles of justice. NALGO must see that the Government, and the N.E.C. did not default on their declarations.

#### "No more dilly-dallying"

MISS L. GRAHAM, Birmingham, supported the demand for an immediate vigorous campaign, with no more "dilly-dallying" by the N.E.C., which should demonstrate its sincerity by applying equal pay to its own staff. One industrialist had already declared his conviction that equal pay would not contribute to inflation, and the N.E.C. should use its campaign to convince the Government of that before the next election.

At this point, another heroic male, C. MAYER, Morecambe and Heysham, intervened to tell Conference, amid angry shouts from women delegates, that though his branch had instructed him to support equal pay, he personally believed that its achievement would lead to the gradual elimination of women from the service.

Then Miss Townson, who had previously intimated the N.E.C.'s opposition

to the amendment on the grounds that it would pledge the Association to a "wider agitation than might be feasible," now said that the Council would accept the second part of the amendment, but objected to the instruction that it must co-operate with all other interested bodies. Miss Hamilton promptly announced her willingness to withdraw the word "all," but Conference refused permission, adopting the amendment as it stood.

A further amendment, by the West Midland district committee and Birmingham on similar lines to the Glasgow amendment having been withdrawn, Conference approved the motion, as amended.

#### SUPPORT FOR FILM

##### "Test of sincerity"

But that was not the last of equal pay. An even livelier debate was to follow on a Manchester motion, deplored the N.E.C.'s failure to contribute to the cost of the proposed film on equal pay, and instructing it to reconsider its decision, and to report how much Headquarters had spent on the campaign since 1949.

Was it to be said, asked S. SHALICE, moving this, that an Association with 190,000 members could not afford to pay its share of the cost of the film which was being made by the Joint Committee on Equal Pay and which would do more to mould public opinion than many thousands of pamphlets?

L. KIRKHAM, seconding, expressed surprise that the women had put up with the position for so long, and W. R. RANKIN, Liverpool, telling Conference that his branch had already contributed £40 for the film, with more to come, suggested that this was a test of the N.E.C.'s sincerity: if it really meant to fight hard for equal pay, it would have backed this film.

##### "Preaching to converted"

For the N.E.C., L. BEVAN protested that it had seriously considered giving £100 towards the cost of the film. It had no doubt of the abilities of Miss Jill Craigie, its producer, and it was satisfied that the film would be a good one. But as a member of the Joint Committee of Professional Organisations on Equal Pay, it had thought it wise first to consult that body. When it did so, it found that not one of the professional organisations on the committee had made any contribution. There was an old saying that "Fifty million Frenchmen can't be wrong"—and those organisations were unanimous in their refusal to back the film. Some had had previous experience of similar ventures and had found that, in almost every one, the cost exceeded the estimate, while the result had been less than was expected. In addition, the N.E.C. had been advised that it was doubtful whether the film would be shown extensively in the commercial cinemas; its showing would probably be confined to small bodies of interested people who

asked for it, which would mean preaching to the converted.

The Association had to spend its money wisely, and the Council had not thought it wise to spend £100 on a film which, according to expert advice, would not give the results hoped for, and might cost a lot more than the estimate.

Replying to the last part of the motion, he said that no activity could be adequately measured by its cost. The Association was doing as much in equal pay as any other organisation in the country.

#### "Give us the ammunition"

Back to the microphone came Miss Hamilton, first to congratulate Liverpool on its contribution—Glasgow had not done quite so well, but had been first in the field—then to denounce Mr. Bevan with a quick-fire flood of Doric scorn. Why decry "preaching to the converted"? she asked. Those who believed in equal pay and discussed it with others must know how to argue the case; the film would give them the ammunition. Why were they so frightened of the commercial cinemas? The Government had machinery which had been used recently to force the commercial circuits to show a film they had originally rejected, and it should be part of the campaign to get that same machinery used, if necessary, to secure the commercial showing of the equal pay film.

A. BLUE, *Glasgow Gas*, commenting on Mr. Bevan's statement that "Fifty million Frenchmen can't be wrong," pointed out that fifty million Frenchmen had been wrong some years ago by being Maginot-minded—with the result that the remnants of their army had to be rescued from the beaches of Dunkirk. "This Conference," he added, "should rescue the remnants of our women from the position in which they have been placed by the incompetence of our own General Staff." With a full-throated cheer, Conference rushed in to the rescue, adopting the motion with an overwhelming majority.

#### Aberdeen Conference "undemocratic"?

Next, P. PAXTON, *Nottingham*, challenged as undemocratic the decision of last year's Conference to support the N.E.C.'s policy of following the Government's lead on wage restraint. That decision had been taken by 1,300 delegates to Conference—less than one per cent. of the membership—on the basis of a confidential document, the contents of which delegates were not allowed to disclose to their members. This was contrary to the Declaration of Human Rights, which proclaimed that the authority of government lay in the will of the people, and he therefore asked Conference to agree that the decision of the Aberdeen Conference was *ultra vires* and, therefore, null and void. He accordingly moved that paragraph 10 of the

Annual Report, recording that the N.E.C. had "noted" the decision, be not received.

Seconding, R. RILEY, *Manchester*, said that the Aberdeen Conference had voluntarily relinquished any claims for higher pay but, because the decision was based on a document marked "secret and confidential," there had been no public recognition for that gesture. On those grounds, the policy of the N.E.C. stood condemned, in conception and purpose.

The President, however, pointed out that the paragraph complained of was a statement of fact, simply recording that the N.E.C. had noted the decision of Conference. To refuse to receive it could not alter the fact—and Conference had another opportunity of discussing the principle. Seeing the force of this, delegates rejected the motion.

#### TARDY NEGOTIATIONS

##### "Set-back to national recovery"

There followed a call from *Liverpool*, instructing the N.E.C., in view of "the danger of a set-back to the national recovery caused by delay through protracted wage negotiations," to urge the Government "to speed up and improve the machinery for collective bargaining in local government, public utility undertakings, and industry generally." Moving this, H. A. JONES suggested that NALGO was particularly fitted to make the representations proposed, because it could not be accused of having any political motive. The discontent and frustration caused by long negotiations were well known:

Last year, 1,818,000 working days were lost in strikes, involving 434,000 workers. That was serious. National recovery through increasing production was so important that all negotiating machinery should be geared up to prevent loss of working time. NALGO would be performing a public duty were it to focus the attention of the Government and the country on this urgent problem.

Seconding, J. MERCER, said that the machinery wanted streamlining—"Which," he added, "I believe has something to do with cutting down the opposition from wind" (*laughter*). They liked the Whitley machinery, and had pinned their faith to it, but they wanted to see it work smoothly, and a little lubrication would be effective.

W. M. SHAW, *North Western and North Wales District Committee*, while approving the motion, suggested that the national health service should be included in its terms.

Accepting the motion on behalf of the N.E.C., L. BEVAN confessed, amid laughter, that he believed in a little lubrication at the proper time, and said that the Council realised the importance of speeding negotiations throughout the public services. It was, however, much easier to point out how slowly the machinery worked than to find a way of speeding it up. They could go only as fast as the

employers would let them, but the Council would closely examine the problem and do everything it could. Conference approved, adopting the motion unanimously.

#### NATIONAL GRADING

##### Middlesex call to end it

Passing from the working of joint negotiation to its effect, L. T. SAUNDERS moved a *Middlesex* motion "that the future policy of NALGO be not to accept national grading." In the Metropolitan district, he said, national grading frequently meant down-grading, leading to constant resort to the clause providing that no officer should be worse off after adoption of the Charter than he was before. Many local authorities, especially in the Metropolitan area, interpreted national gradings as maximum gradings. While it might be easy to grade such people as education welfare officers and sanitary inspectors, who performed statutory duties which were similar throughout the country, he doubted the possibility of grading committee clerks and officers in finance sections with widely differing duties.

Opposing, G. DIXON, *North Western and North Wales District*, declared that NALGO had pinned its faith to Whitleyism, and, despite all criticisms and shortcomings of the Whitley Council system, had achieved through it much that it could not have gained in any other way. "We have had wonderful advantages from Whitleyism," he championed, "as we know in the North-West, where we started it for you—and we do not start things in the North-West unless we know they are right."

##### "Greatest good of greatest number"

The N.E.C. also opposed the motion, and its spokesman, G. R. ASHTON, thanked Mr. Dixon for putting its case for him. The Council, Mr. Ashton added, had been urged by many sections of members to adopt national grading, and criticised by many for not bringing it in quickly enough. It realised that not all benefited from a particular line of action, but its policy was the greatest good of the greatest number; and, throughout the country, many members had benefited. To quote one example, the regrading of the engineering staff of one small authority resulted in one officer going from A.P.T. IV to VII, one from A.P.T. III to VI, three from A.P.T. III to V, and one from A.P.T. II to III, and the branch secretary, reporting this to Headquarters, commented: "Whatever Middlesex may say, we think that the N.J.C. is wonderful."

Replying, Mr. Saunders told Conference that in Middlesex, the council had agreed to put authorised officers, mental health, on grades A.P.T. V and VI, and social welfare officers on A.P.T. IV and V, but the National Joint Council had adopted for these officers grades IV and III respectively—and the officers concerned were very

sore about it. His council had, with difficulty, been persuaded to retain the original rates, but those who succeeded the present holders of the posts might have to go down a couple of grades, and that might also happen in other places. Notwithstanding this final appeal, however, Conference rejected the motion.

#### Like work—like pay

The N.E.C. also opposed the following motion from *Poole*, seeking to instruct the staff side of the National Joint Council to ensure that officers doing like work in local government were remunerated at least at the same minimum grade; to press for an establishment of designated posts, and schedules of duties constituting such posts, throughout the service so that this might be achieved; and to deal with this matter as vital in view of the many anomalies which had arisen in the interpretation of the Charter by the employers.

Moving this, W. P. SAYERS complained that the Charter, though designed for everyone, had not been fully implemented in favour of the "little man." The dissatisfied officer had difficulty in formulating his appeal on a narrow margin of fact and was unsure of his ground because he did not know what his duties were supposed to be. The motion aimed at smoothing out the difficulties.

For the N.E.C., G. R. ASHTON said that the motion was impracticable. "Who is to decide," he asked, "who is doing like work in various types of authority? Who is going to collate the vast amount of information? How can local authorities, that vary so much in population, in duties, in rateable value, and in services, be related?" The same argument applied, he added, to an amendment by *Tottenham and District Gas Branch*, which sought to include the nationalised industries in the terms of the motion. Mr. Sayers expressed his readiness to incorporate the amendment in his motion, but, though he returned to the microphone to contend that the system had been found practicable in every other industry, Conference would not support him, rejecting the motion as amended.

#### CHARTER ANOMALIES

##### "Should be settled nationally"

Against N.E.C. opposition, MRS. A. C. HITCHMAN, *Southend-on-Sea*, moved her branch's motion asking Conference to fix September 30 as the time limit beyond which the N.E.C. should not further defer action to secure removal of the anomalies created by the award of the National Arbitration Tribunal increasing the General and Clerical scales without any parallel increase in the Higher Clerical and A.P.T. scales. Southend, said Mrs. Hitchman, was tired of raising this problem in the Eastern district committee and being told that it was a matter for the employing authority. In their view it was a problem the N.E.C. should tackle at once and settle nationally. Overlapping

grades caused serious difficulties. People in Grade I took on heavy responsibilities, yet some earned less than those in the General Division. The N.E.C. should try to simplify the classification of gradings, possibly eliminating some of them.

For the N.E.C., W. PIT STEELE asked Conference to reject the motion. As the Annual Report showed, he said, the N.E.C. had done everything possible. But it had failed to convince the employers, who held that the arbitration award had removed an anomaly, not create one since, in their view a man doing a higher grade of clerical work should not necessarily be in an inferior position to the young professional man entering the service in A.P.T. I. On the other hand, there was ample evidence that it was possible to convince local authorities, through local joint committees, that there was inequality of grading, and to get it put right. While the N.E.C. thought that the problem could be solved locally, it would do everything possible at national level: but the motion was impracticable—a view with which Conference agreed, rejecting it.

#### LORD BURDEN'S MESSAGE

##### "Do not rock the boat"

At this point, delegates put aside their agenda to welcome LORD BURDEN, an old friend of NALGO. Introducing him, the President said that all delegates were aware of the good work he had done for the Association, and would wish to join in congratulating him on his recent elevation to the Peerage. He regretted they could not also have with them another good friend of the Association, GEOFFREY HUTCHINSON, K.C., M.P., who, he believed, was that day looking after the interests of members in Westminster.

Lord Burden, who was received with cheers, expressed his appreciation of the many expressions of goodwill he had received from members and branches throughout the country.

"Your agenda," he continued, "is concerned with many familiar problems, but I should like to make one appeal to you. Do not rock the boat. The next few months will be of enormous importance to the trade union movement. Let us keep cool heads and our feet firmly planted on the ground, and we shall win through together."

#### Threat to local government

Erskine May had written that Britain's achievement, alone among the nations of the world, in maintaining her liberties through the centuries, was largely due to her local institutions. Since Anglo-Saxon days, we had learned the duties and responsibilities of citizens, and become exercised in public affairs, through local government. While that was true, it was equally true that local government today could function only within the framework provided by central government.

"Local self-government," Lord Burden declared, "is the corner-stone of British



"Do not rock the boat"

democracy (cheers). But is it an exaggeration to say that local government is in imminent danger of collapse? More and more it is being by-passed; more and more of its significant functions are being lost. Democratic self-government is giving way to bureaucratic democracy, and the great problem of to-day is to re-establish those vital links between the public and those who serve the public (cheers).

"Democracy," he concluded, "is more than a mere counting of heads; it is a way of life, and can find its best expression in true local self-government. I plead for courage and imagination on the part of those who believe in self-government. The legitimate interests of the staffs must be safeguarded. Let us then strengthen our organisation so that non-unionism in the local government service is a thing of the past (hear, hear!) and at the same time recapture some of the idealism of the leaders of the movement of the olden days. As William Morris taught, fellowship is life; lack of it is death. Cannot NALGO be the great fellowship of the local government service of this country? If it is, then whatever difficulties are ahead of us, we have no reason to be afraid" (loud cheers).

#### HARDSHIP FOR 18-YEAR-OLDS

##### Benefit of increment lost

Conference confirmed with acclamation a vote of thanks to Lord Burden and Mr. Hutchinson, moved by W. MORRIS, *Sheffield*, then returned to the agenda to consider a *Lindsey County* motion urging revision of the General Division scale to ensure that the increment at the age of 18 was not almost entirely offset by increased deductions for national insurance and superannuation contributions. Formally moving this, C. BULLOCK said that at present the net weekly increment for a man of 18 was 1s. 1d. and for a woman 1s. 8½d.

While sympathising with the point, A. E. NORTROP, N.E.C., stressed that the injustice suffered by these young people was not an individual injustice, but a general result of national policy. In effect, the motion asked the employer, who also had to pay a share of superannuation and increased national insurance contributions, to pay in addition part of the employee's contributions, and this would be strongly resisted by the employers. Although it accepted a *Glasgow* amendment, moved by J. M. ANDERSON, to extend the concession sought to

Scotland, Conference rejected the motion as amended.

## PROMOTION EXAMINATION

### "Intermediates" as alternatives?

The N.E.C. also opposed the next motion, formally moved by J. CATLOW, Newark, asking that the recognition given to the intermediate examinations of the I.M.T.A., I.C.A., or S.I.A.A., as promotion qualifications for finance staffs should be extended to all intermediate examinations of similar professional bodies which had been recognised as appropriate to the local government service. Opposing this for the N.E.C., N. W. BINGHAM explained that the intermediate examinations referred to in the motion had been accepted by the National Joint Council only after their breadth and scope had been carefully considered. To accept the proposition that every intermediate examination should be recognised without further consideration would go far to destroy the purpose of the examination qualification system. More important was the fact that Conference would soon be considering the revision of the whole promotion examination system, which would call for careful review of the intermediates of all the professional societies. He therefore suggested that the motion should be withdrawn. Conference agreed, having first accepted a *West Bridgford* amendment incorporating in the motion Section A of the Associate Membership Examination of The Institution of Civil Engineers.

### Double increment as incentive

Next, T. BARTON moved a *Manchester* motion directing the N.E.C. immediately to implement the 1949 Conference resolution seeking amendment of the Charter to entitle an officer in the General Division to two increments on passing the promotion examination or an accepted alternative.

In the Annual Report, Mr. Barton said, the N.E.C. had promised to include this among its long-term proposals for amendment of the Charter. But this was not a long-term proposal, it was a live issue.

Paragraph 28 of the Charter (which provides that no General Division officer shall be eligible for promotion unless he has passed the promotion examination or its equivalent) had been deferred because not enough qualified staff were coming forward to fill the vacancies. The reason was the absence of incentive; for it was no incentive to say to a man: "You can get promotion after passing the examination—when a vacancy arises." It might be years before a vacancy arose. Something must be done at the time of passing the examination, so that those who had passed were put slightly in front of those who had not bothered to sit.

Seconding, N. HURD, *Manchester*, pointed out that the N.J.C. had provided

for special increments for shorthand typists, because they had a scarcity value. Those who passed the promotion examination also had a scarcity value, because of the inadequacy of the salaries offered.

Opposing for the N.E.C., A. E. NORTROP agreed that General Division scales were inadequate. But, linked with the new scheme for the promotion examination were provisions for training and grants for passing examinations. There would be no point in asking for two increments after passing the examination when they were considering the whole structure of that examination.

Claiming his right of reply, Mr. Barton alleged that Mr. Nortrop had evaded the main issue—the refusal of the N.E.C. to implement the Aberdeen Conference resolution. Conference evidently agreed, adopting the motion.

## ELECTRICITY AGREEMENT

### Consultative Committee vindicated

Notwithstanding a fluent and vigorous attack, C. R. GIBSON, *Bristol Electricity*, was less successful in persuading delegates to repudiate the action of the National Electricity Consultative Committee in refusing to accept the decision of the Aberdeen Conference on what his motion described as "an important issue of principle." At Aberdeen, Mr. Gibson reminded delegates, they had instructed the N.E.C. to consult district consultative committees and branches on the permanent agreement which was to be negotiated for the electricity service. Despite this instruction, before members had received their copies of "L.G.S." reporting the decision, the Consultative Committee had decided to ignore it. It had argued that consultation with districts and branches would cause delay. Yet the employers' proposals were not received until February this year, and the proposals were not agreed until the third week of March. The Committee had seven months in which to consult branches and formulate a policy.

### Rift in the ranks

But Mr. Gibson failed to get the support of his electricity colleagues for this criticism, as was made clear by the next speaker, A. S. BUTCHER, *Northmet Electricity*. The Consultative Committee, he declared, did refer the matter to district consultative committees, and it was apparent that most electricity officers did not support the decision of the Aberdeen Conference. Mr. Gibson's "point of principle" was to have a crack at the platform for not doing something which the Aberdeen Conference had asked it to do, but which it found to be impossible. "We in the electricity service," said Mr. Butcher, "had ample time to consider this proposal. We appreciated that your decision at Aberdeen was impracticable, and we gave our National Consultative Committee *carte blanche* to go ahead with the negotiations."

S. W. FISHER, *Southern Electricity No. 1*, reinforced this point with an amendment commending the "courage" of the Consultative Committee in disregarding the instructions of Conference, thereby allowing final grading to be in the hands of members by April 1, 1950. Through their district consultative committees, he said, electricity staffs had endorsed by a large majority the action of the Consultative Committee and were pleased with the final agreement. Seconding the amendment, W. E. BLAKE, of the same branch, declared roundly that the district consultative committees knew they had good negotiators and trusted them. Because of this, they had secured their agreement, effective from last April, whereas, had the Consultative Committee obeyed the Conference instruction, it might still have been engaged in fruitless negotiation. There was cash in speed.

But if his service colleagues failed to support him, Mr. Gibson found a loyal henchman in a sister service. Coming to his aid, T. FERNLEY, *Manchester Gas*, said that this was the old story of Conference making decisions and the people responsible for carrying them out failing to do so. If Conference was to be master in its own house, he declared, it must call a halt to this sort of thing, and make it clear that its decisions were final and sacred and must be carried out.

### "Gorgeous Gussie"

The next three speakers widened still further the rift in the electricity ranks. After D. C. MCHUGO, *London Electricity (Western)* had commended the Consultative Committee for using its initiative—an action for which he would like it to be awarded a medal—A. E. GODBOLD, *Suffolk sub-area Electricity*, chided Conference for its inconsistency. Often, he said, matters had not been referred to branches and districts because to do so would involve delay. Last year, they were foolish enough to order such reference—and now they were both congratulating and condemning the Consultative Committee for disobeying that instruction. "You cannot have butter on both sides of your bread and make a jam sandwich of it;" Mr. Godbold concluded, amid laughter.

Hitherto, speakers had been chary of metaphor. But not the next speaker, G. L. EVERARD, *Yorkshire No. 3 sub-area Electricity*, who delighted delegates with a piquant mixture. "We have chastened the Consultative Committee for procrastination," he said, "and now we chastise them for taking the bull by the horns. I liken the Charter to Gorgeous Gussie; at every Conference since it was adopted, we have been trying to clip the frills from the panties. Here we have the 1950 edition of Gorgeous Gussie, without any frills on the panties, and have something that we can get our teeth into (*loud laughter*). We have a



"Trying to clip the frills from the panties"

strong basis for negotiation, and we have to prove that our negotiators are strong enough to see that this scheme is implemented correctly." Mr. Everard suggested that Mr. Gibson should withdraw his motion, but this Mr. Gibson refused to do, saying that he preferred to go down fighting.

Then E. W. G. HETHERINGTON, N.E.C., gave the official version of the incident. The Council had not ignored the Aberdeen decision, he said. It had referred it to the Consultative Committee, instructing it, if possible, to give effect to the decision. The Committee regarded it as so urgent that it put aside other business and devoted almost the whole of one meeting to considering it. After three hours, the Committee decided, by 16 votes to 1, that it would be impracticable to carry out the instruction. When this decision was reported to the district consultative committees, 11 out of the 14 endorsed it. The Committee disliked rejecting a Conference decision, but the course it had taken was the only one open to it if electricity members were to get a square deal.

Conference was by now fully convinced and, despite a final plea by Mr. Gibson, adopted by an overwhelming majority the amendment commending the courage of the Consultative Committee for its disobedience.

#### No "civil service" Charter

Nor had it any greater sympathy for a following motion by I. V. WARNER, Edinburgh, asking that paragraph 29 of the Annual Report be not accepted. The paragraph rejected as "neither practicable nor desirable" a proposal, referred to the Council by the Aberdeen Conference, that the present local government Charter should be replaced by a new scheme for England, Wales, and Scotland, based on civil service conditions. The N.E.C. had pointed out that the structure of civil service agreements, based on established staffs recruited by competitive examination, and large numbers of unestablished staffs employed on lower salary standards, was markedly different from the Charter, and Conference agreed, rejecting the motion.

#### WORK AFTER 65

##### N.E.C. policy accepted

Also rejected was a demand by M. A. JONES, Liverpool, for non-acceptance of paragraph 31 of the Annual Report. This recorded that, in view of the Government's policy of encouraging elderly workers to remain in employment as long as they were able to do so, the Council considered it essential to modify its former policy that all officers should retire on reaching pensionable age. While agreeing that officers should be encouraged to retire, it recommended that:

Where employing authorities insisted upon retaining an individual officer aged 65, he should retire and be re-engaged for a maximum period of one year only, any subsequent proposal for re-engagement being the subject of careful review; This procedure should be recognised as one for discussion at local joint committee level;

The Association's representatives on joint negotiating bodies should endeavour to secure that any re-engagements should be accompanied by measures designed to safeguard the interests of younger officers;

Any proposals for changes in legislation should be subjected to the closest scrutiny and fully reported upon to Conference.

#### "Would prejudice promotion?"

This policy, said Mr. Jones, would prejudice the promotion prospects of younger men. Seconding, J. MERCER, Liverpool, pointed out that re-engagement of a senior officer in another post would not ease the position. If a town clerk retired at 65 and came back as an establishment officer, younger officers would still suffer.

A. BLUE, Glasgow Gas, while agreeing that the N.E.C.'s compromise was the most practical solution of the problem, urged that the Association must insist on being consulted at local level wherever re-engagement of an over-age officer was proposed. NALGO's policy should be that it would assist in solving the nation's man-power problem, provided it had the right to discuss whether or not the principle should be applied in a particular case.

Supporting Liverpool, R. RILEY, Manchester, said that youth must be given opportunities. The man-power emergency which faced the country three or four years ago was now receding, and the man who stayed in the service after 65 did so for his own advantage.

#### "No serious problem"

For the N.E.C., I. BEVAN said that the difficulty about insisting that NALGO must be consulted, as Mr. Blue had suggested, was that the employers insisted that the Association had no right to be consulted. They were in a stronger position, because they were empowered by the Superannuation Act to continue the services of an officer for a period not exceeding one year after he attained pensionable age, and after that from time

to time as they deemed expedient. This was a statutory right, and the employers contended that the Association had no right to interfere in their exercise of it. The N.E.C. agreed that retention of over-age officers would block promotion prospects, and would do everything it could to avoid it, but it was a problem which could be dealt with only by local negotiation. There was no evidence of any serious problem: most officers did, in fact, retire at or before 65. Conference accepted this explanation, and the N.E.C. proposals.

#### VOTING IN THE N.E.C.

##### Only two "major issues"

There followed a lighter interlude, prompted by a *West Suffolk and District* motion for non-acceptance of paragraph 41 of the Annual Report, dealing with the instruction of the Aberdeen Conference that reports of N.E.C. meetings in "L.G.S." should contain a record of voting on all "major issues" discussed by the Council. The Council, the paragraph recorded, had agreed that, at any stage in a debate, it should be competent for a member to move, or for it to be put from the Chair, that the matter under discussion be regarded as a major issue. This motion was to be put immediately and, if it were agreed, the vote on the discussion must be by roll call, the names of those voting being published in "L.G.S."

In practice, this procedure has been followed only twice in the past twelve months—in the votes on the adaptation report and on the Council's motion on salaries policy—and C. WINSOR, mover of the West Suffolk motion, thought this was not enough. More than once, he believed, individual members of the N.E.C. had moved that a particular item be regarded as a "major issue," but the absence of records of voting in "L.G.S." showed how unsuccessful they had been.

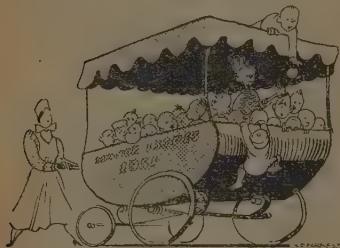
#### "Shrinking from publicity?"

"Either the majority of the N.E.C. are giving up many hours of their time to the discussion of trivialities," he commented, "or they are shrinking from the glare of publicity, and wish to hide their views under the cloak of anonymity." Mr. Winsor agreed, with Conference approval, to incorporate in his motion an *Islington* amendment instructing the N.E.C. to "cease to avoid implementing" decisions of Conference.

E. J. SHARP, *Islington*, seconding the amended motion, said that the main object of asking for voting to be recorded was to enable members to judge whether the candidates for election to the N.E.C. were likely to reflect their points of view. At present, most members knew nothing about the candidates for whom they were asked to vote. It was strange that, although the N.E.C. had produced an Annual Report of 149 paragraphs, it had found only two "major issues" in twelve months—although when it opposed the

proposal to record voting at the Aberdeen Conference, it said that every issue was a major issue for somebody. There were, in fact, plenty of major issues, and it was for the N.E.C. to devise a scheme for recording the voting upon them.

*Liverpool* had tabled a further amendment suggesting, facetiously, that, in view of the cost of N.E.C. meetings, at which, apparently, so few major issues were discussed, the Council should consider whether the business of the Association could not be discharged more economically in future. Withdrawing this in favour of the *West Suffolk* motion, W. R. RANKIN commented, amid laughter, that, after nine months' labour and at a cost of £10,000, the 60 members of the N.E.C. had produced only two major issues, whereas it took only two people to produce the Dionne quintuplets. "We hope to improve that net reproduction rate," Mr. Rankin declared.



"We hope to improve that reproduction rate"

In defence of the N.E.C., L. H. TAYLOR, from the platform, pointed out that the Aberdeen Conference had not told it how to decide, or who was to decide, what were major issues. Therefore, it adopted the procedure recorded in the Report. The two major issues before Conference, salaries and adaptation of Association machinery, had been voted upon in the Council, and the votes had been recorded. Conference, however, was not satisfied and adopted the motion as amended.

## GRADING OF AUTHORITIES

Middlesex tries again

Returning to service matters, delegates debated a Middlesex motion asking that the national grading of posts should be accompanied by national grading of local authorities, based on population and measure of responsibility, the salary paid to the individual officer being the national award varied in ratio to the grading of the authority that employed him. Moving this, N. W. HOWARD agreed with the principle that a trade union must protect its less fortunate members. National grading provided that protection for the officers employed by the poorer and meaner authorities. But grading of posts, on its present footing, put officers such as those employed in Middlesex at a

disadvantage. Any policy which assisted one section but detracted from the status of another was not good. National grading of authorities would largely adjust the differences, and would, in the long run, bring about the upgrading of posts graded nationally. The principle had been admitted in the case of town clerks and other chief officers.

In an authority serving a big population, Mr. Howard continued, there was greater delegation of powers and more staff to cope with the work. Each added to the responsibilities of any officer above the General Division. While titles and duties of officers employed by different authorities might be identical on paper, the officer who dealt with a larger population generally carried an added responsibility, and his salary should, therefore, be higher than that of his colleague in the smaller authority.

### Increasing responsibilities

Seconding, J. L. DAVIDGE, Middlesex, quoted the example of area welfare officers. The N.E.C. had negotiated a national grading for these officers before it was known what their duties would be. The National Assistance Act left wide scope to local authorities, whose schemes were now being slowly implemented: but the schemes covered a period of five years, and most would not be brought into operation until the five years were up. Therefore, the duties of the officer would increase the whole time, and he would get greater responsibility, although he would remain on the national grading. Middlesex had a big welfare department and its officers, on Grade V, had been agitating for higher grading and might have got it but for the announcement of national grading on Grade III. When this happened, the Middlesex committee proposed that all the officers should be down-graded to Grade III, and this would have been done but for the fight put up by the chief officers. NALGO owed a duty to the officers in these higher grades. It would have been better to have prescribed a range of grades—say III, IV, and V, thus giving the big authority a chance to grade officers in Grade V. Then those in Grade III could claim more as their duties increased.

### "Class distinction"

Opposing the motion, G. DIXON, *North Western and North Wales District*, said that to base salaries on the size of an authority was most unfair to the officers in the small rural and urban districts whose work, covering a wider range and complexity of duties, was often far more important than that of the officer who specialised in a particular branch of the work in a larger authority (*cheers*). The motion, in effect, created a class distinction between large and small authorities, and that had never been the policy of NALGO.

Supporting Middlesex, E. J. VARLEY, *Gateshead*, said that its proposal should

have been adopted when the Charter was introduced. It could not be claimed today that it was applied in every district correctly: it was a national Charter, locally applied. Teachers had differential grading: why not local government officers?

### "No question of privilege"

Also supporting, on behalf of *Hayes and Harlington*, R. J. HILL protested that there was no question of privilege for the officers of large authorities. But such officers did have greater responsibilities than did those in smaller authorities. National grading, if confined to one grade, was necessarily based on posts with the minimum responsibility, and it was, therefore, essential to provide for the officer with greater responsibility.

For the N.E.C., L. BEVAN opposed the motion, saying that he would like to bring Conference back to a sense of reality. "We are being asked," he said, "to divide the country into classes of authorities, large and small, based on population, rateable value, or any other criterion you can name. One of our chief objects when we negotiated the Charter was that there should be a standard scale applicable to every local authority. In Scotland, on the other hand, the local authorities were divided into three groups, and officers in the bottom group were very badly paid. It has taken us from 1946 until recently to remove the grouping system in Scotland: are we now to reverse the process and start grouping systems again? I think that that would be one of the most retrograde steps we could take" (*hear, hear!*).

### Danger of Ranges

"It is also suggested," Mr. Bevan continued, "that we should have ranges of scales, the local authority having discretion to place an officer where it pleases within the range. We know what the reaction of local authorities would be to that proposal: if they are free to choose between Grade III and Grade V, there are not many authorities, large or small, big enough in outlook to put an officer into the top grade. He might get into the middle grade, but the majority would get into the bottom grade and stop there, unless the appeals committee altered their position."

T. SPENCE, *Scottish District*, supported this view on the basis of Scotland's experience. "Immediately you get groupings of local authorities on a rateable value or population basis," he declared, "you will get backdoor methods of approach from the employers' side through their own associations, which are as strong as ours."

After further opposition to the motion from W. M. SHAW, *North Western and North Wales District*, who declared that its adoption would be equivalent to throwing the smaller authorities to the wolves, Mr. Howard replied to the debate. It implied no threat to the officers of

smaller authorities, he argued. In fact, it would help them, since, if the similar posts in bigger authorities carried higher salaries, they would apply for them, with the result that the small authority would have to pay "over the odds" to retain its staff. But this final argument failed to convince Conference, which emphatically rejected the motion.

## NATIONAL GRADING

### "Make it a minimum"

A similar fate awaited the following motion, also from *Middlesex*, and moved by Mr. Howard, proposing that national grading should be accepted as minimum grading only. With this Mr. Howard incorporated a *Hammersmith* amendment suggesting that each provincial Whitley Council should be given discretion to fix or approve higher gradings within its area. This time, Mr. Howard was content to put the motion formally, leaving his seconder, P. T. BAYES, *Hammersmith*, to argue the case for it. What, he asked delegates, would be their reaction—and what would be the reaction of their employers—were the National Joint Council to approve a grading which showed that the posts they held were overgraded? That had in fact happened to hundreds of posts since national grading started. The position was becoming dangerous. A standard grading ignored varying conditions up and down the country, and prevented a local authority making merit awards. It was, in fact, resulting in the downgrading of posts.

R. RILEY, *Manchester*, supporting, argued that the motion introduced elasticity, and permitted local negotiation for officers confronted with special, extraordinary, or experimental duties.

### Conflict with N.J.C. policy

Opposing for the N.E.C., G. R. ASHTON said that the motion conflicted with the general policy on which the National Joint Council had been working, and with the instructions of previous Conferences. When the Charter was negotiated, the employers were given an undertaking that Charter conditions should be standard conditions. The 1949 Conference accepted a report by the N.E.C. confirming that view, upon which the employers were adamant. But even if they could be induced to agree, the Association should think twice before adopting a course which might put it back where it was before the Charter was negotiated. Provincial councils already had power to consider salaries and service conditions, "with special reference to the need for the establishment of differential standard rates in the provincial area or any part thereof." On this matter, also, Conference supported the N.E.C., rejecting the motion as amended.

Still on grading, delegates turned next to a *South Shields* motion, introduced by G. MCVAY, urging the N.E.C. to seek national grading for rent collectors

employed by local authorities. Such grading, he reminded Conference, had been agreed for sanitary inspectors and education welfare officers, whose duties were uniform throughout the country, and similar uniformity should be applied to rent collectors. But this plea, seconded by D. R. N. STRANG, *South Shields*, was opposed by W. KENYON, *Liverpool*, on behalf of the rent collectors in his own branch. They did not agree, said Mr. Kenyon, that the duties of rent collectors in different authorities were uniform; while some merely collected rent, others were "housing managers" and their jobs had many ramifications. For the N.E.C., H. W. JOHN supported the Liverpool argument, and Conference rejected the motion, together with a *Bethnal Green* amendment seeking to fix the grading at not less than Miscellaneous Division II.

### Sickness on Bank Holidays

Then *Southport* reintroduced its motion, defeated at Aberdeen, calling for the insertion of a clause in the Charter to provide that an officer absent through sickness on any statutory or general public holiday should receive sickness payment and compensatory leave. Moving this briefly, C. H. LAMB said that it would affect only a minority of members, but for them it would represent a slight improvement. But not even this modest approach could win the support of the N.E.C., which last year had dismissed the claim as "niggling." Its spokesman, H. R. JONES, said that the staff side of the N.J.C. had enough serious matters to deal with without undertaking anything of this kind. Conference agreed, decisively rejecting both the motion and a *Harrow* amendment suggesting that, where public holidays occurred during an officer's sickness, sick pay should be suspended and holiday pay substituted, the days being ignored for the purpose of calculating the period of sickness.

### Doctors' certificates concession

A more cordial reception awaited a *Nottingham* motion, moved by S. WADSWORTH, instructing the N.E.C. to consider seeking amendment of the Charter sick pay provisions so that it should no longer be necessary to produce a doctor's certificate in respect of illness lasting less than four days. Such an amendment, the motion contended, would be in the interests of employers, local government officers, and overworked doctors. Since the motion was tabled, the National Joint Council has decided that an officer should not suffer deduction of benefit through failure to submit a certificate covering the first day of illness, provided that a certificate was submitted by the fourth day, thus meeting Mr. Wadsworth's point in respect of local government officers. But, he explained, the point had not been met in respect of transferred officers, and he therefore wished his motion to go forward with the

inclusion of a *Birmingham* amendment extending the concession to them. This the N.E.C. accepted, and Conference approved without debate.

It proceeded, also without debate, to refer the N.E.C. a *Luton* motion on financial assistance for post-entry training, together with amendments by *Birmingham* and *East Sussex*, seeking for every officer studying for an examination, at his option, either a monetary grant for examination success, or assistance under the new scheme of training grants.

## SECURITY OF TENURE

### Progress of negotiations

Next item was a *Bognor Regis* motion urging the N.E.C., in the absence of security of tenure for local government officers generally, to press for a right of appeal to the provincial council in all instances of dismissal, from whatever cause. Hearing from the President that the N.E.C. wished to make a statement on the position, its mover, H. WATKINS, agreed to put it formally, leaving the way clear for the statement, made by E. R. DAVIES.

The Council, Mr. Davies explained, was in entire sympathy with the principle of security of tenure, but it was not happy about the motion, which wanted a right of appeal in all cases of dismissal.

It could not suggest to the employers that there should be a right of appeal against dismissal for a criminal offence.

### NALGO proposals

More than a year ago, he added, the N.E.C. had submitted proposals on security of tenure to the Ministry of Health. The Ministry replied that the matter was one for the local authorities' associations, whereupon the N.E.C. submitted its proposals to the National Joint Council. The proposals were that local government officers should not be removable from office except—

- (a) with the consent of the Minister of Health, or
- (b) by resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the members of the local authority present and voting at a meeting of the authority, the notice of which specified consideration of the officer's removal as an item of business, and subject, in any case, to the approval of the Minister of Health being obtained.

The employers' secretary of the N.J.C. replied that he did not think that this was an appropriate matter to bring before the N.J.C., but suggested that it should be taken up direct with the local authority associations. Thereupon, direct approach was made to the associations and also to the Joint Committee for Town Clerks and the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers. All had agreed to discuss the proposals, and it was hoped to arrange a meeting soon after Conference. In view of that position, Mr. Davies suggested that the motion should be withdrawn.

This Mr. Watkins readily agreed to do, first commenting that his branch had no

thought of seeking a right of appeal against dismissal for a criminal offence. The kind of case it had in mind was that of a small authority which dismissed as redundant a man of 32 on the maximum of the General Division, to replace him with a junior at a much lower wage. That was a slur on the service. (*hear, hear!*)

Next, J. P. LEWIS, *Manchester Area Health Services*, moved that paragraph 81 of the Annual Report, setting out the terms of a salary and service conditions agreement reached by the Pharmaceutical Council for the Health Services, be not received, on the ground that, since NALGO was not represented on the Council, it should not seek credit for negotiating the agreement. But when L. BEVAN, N.E.C., pointed out that, although NALGO had no representatives on the Pharmaceutical Council, it had members in that service to whom the agreement was of interest, Conference rejected the motion.

## TRANSPORT PROBLEMS

### Annual Report criticised

Then W. G. BRAY, *Bristol Tramways and Carriage Co.*, aroused delegates from the somnolence which was beginning to descend upon them by vigorously attacking paragraph 95 of the Annual Report, which records successful recruitment of members in passenger road transport undertakings, but admits that discussions with the Transport and General Workers' Union, designed to avoid "poaching" and inter-union friction, begun in October, 1949, had so far failed to produce agreement. This paragraph, Mr. Bray complained, gave the impression that NALGO had no urgent problems in the transport field. It failed to mention branches like his own where, although the branch had been in existence for three years, NALGO had not even secured recognition by the employing authority. It said that agreements had been signed with several companies, but failed to mention the nature of those agreements or to compare them with the Charter. Nor did it tell the whole truth about the discussions with the Transport and General Workers' Union. The last meeting was held on November 25, 1949, but in the seven months since then no move of any consequence had been made for the benefit of any of the company-controlled staffs.

### "N.E.C. has no policy"

The Conference meeting of transport staffs had revealed that the N.E.C. had no policy and did not know how to break the deadlock—it was difficult for branch secretaries to hold members subjected to such lack of interest from the top.

"I suggest," Mr. Bray concluded, amid laughter, "that the N.E.C. has been hiding its head in the sand, and the only appropriate action for Conference to take in such circumstances is to smack that part of its collective anatomy which presumably will be uppermost. I ask the Conference to smack."



*"I ask Conference to smack"*

After G. C. EDWARDS, *Crossville, Chester*, and G. E. JONES, *Midland Red H.Q.*, had supported this criticism, L. BEVAN replied for the N.E.C. He regretted, he said, that this issue should have been raised, since no good purpose would be served by public discussion of NALGO's troubles with the Transport and General Workers' Union. On the whole, relations between the two unions had been friendly for many years. But even the best regulated families had occasional squabbles, and there was such a squabble between them in the transport field. Nevertheless, they had generally been able to settle their difficulties, and he hoped that the present trouble would be overcome.

The position in Bristol, Mr. Bevan explained, was that a branch of NALGO was formed about three years ago. Soon afterwards, application was made for salary scales and conditions similar to the Charter, but was rejected. A trade dispute was reported, and the matter referred to the National Arbitration Tribunal, but the Tribunal found against the claim. The branch was advised to submit a revised claim, but rejected this advice and asked Headquarters to approach the T. & G.W.U.—which also had a branch in the undertaking—with a view to local co-operation in the interests of both organisations. Headquarters had endeavoured to bring this about. He regretted the seven months' delay, but it was not true that nothing had happened. NALGO had pressed the T. & G.W.U. to discuss the matter again, and was continuing its efforts.

Notwithstanding this explanation, however, Conference supported the transport members' and the motion was carried.

## ROAD HAULAGE POSITION

### Still hope of agreement

Mr. Bevan returned to the microphone to make a statement on the Association's position in road haulage, in which the T. & G.W.U. and the Railway Clerks' Association were resisting its claim to represent administrative staffs on the joint negotiating body which was being set up.

NALGO entered this field, Mr. Bevan explained, after the Transport Commission had proposed to set up a Road Transport Executive to include both haulage and passenger staffs. The Associa-

tion already had in membership a large body of municipal transport staffs who would be transferred to the new Executive and, because road haulage staffs were to have the same employer, it decided to recruit them also.

After it had recruited 2,500; however, there was a change of policy and the Executive was split into two separate authorities, one for passenger transport and one for road haulage. NALGO thereupon applied to the Road Haulage Executive for representation for its members, but was told that representation must be agreed amongst the trade unions themselves. The T. & G.W.U. and the R.C.A. refused to admit its claim for seats, and the Association took the dispute to the T.U.C. They had met the T.U.C. and had discussed the problem at length with the T. & G.W.U. and the R.C.A. The discussions were deferred for further consideration, and they were now awaiting another meeting. "We still hope that it will be possible to reach agreement," Mr. Bevan concluded, and Conference, tacitly endorsing that hope, passed on to the next business.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

### "More propaganda" call

This was a motion by the *Metropolitan District*, moved by G. W. HERRICK; welcoming the N.E.C.'s efforts to implement the Association's public relations policy, but re-emphasising the importance of providing full information to members, thus stimulating participation in all Association activities, and again directing the attention of the Council to the need for more field work amongst and propaganda material for districts and branches.

Mr. Herrick paid tribute to the N.E.C.'s public relations work during the past year, and especially to the "new look" of "L.G.S." But the Metropolitan district suggested that the picture was not so rosy as it was painted in the Annual Report. There, they read of so many new branch P.R.O.s being appointed, of so many more district committees doing this, that and the other. But, whereas the N.E.C. seemed to have gone in for quantity, the Metropolitan district was more concerned with quality. It was not satisfied with what it had found in its own district—and when he met district P.R.O.s and chairmen from all over the country the previous evening, he had learned that, if the Metropolitan picture was grey, that of the others was black. A better yardstick was the branch magazine movement. One branch magazine to every seven branches was not good enough. The most urgent needs at the moment were a big increase in propaganda material and more field work. To the average member, the Association was becoming more and more complex, and he was getting fogged. Branches and districts expected much more active co-operation from the N.E.C. "I urge members of the Council to leave the council chamber and come and see us," Mr.

Herrick concluded. "They may learn something from us, and they will teach us a good deal."

W. A. ADKINS, *East Ham*, seconding, declared that successful public relations called for continuous attack and dissemination of information. Only through a well-informed membership could NALGO be effective, and it was up to the N.E.C. to take the lead. H. REYNOLDS, *Yorkshire (East Riding)*, supporting, urged that visits by N.E.C. members to outlying branches where they could study local conditions would be better than "a flood of propaganda material which might not be read."

For the N.E.C., N. W. BINGHAM, chairman of its public relations committee, accepted the motion. The Council, he said, was already providing full information as far as it could. It had taken some trouble in revising the layout of "L.G.S." which was the main source of information to members, and it gathered that the revised look had met with approval—at any rate, this Conference had so far been unique in that nobody had wanted to sack the editor: a fact which probably disappointed him, since journalists thrived on criticism and controversy (*laughter*). In addition, it sent out a large amount of pamphlets and general information to members.

#### Task of districts and branches

"But we cannot," he emphasised, "do all the job from Headquarters. Only you can do the field work. We stimulate all we can. We believe intensely in the value of branch magazines, but we cannot start them; we can only help you, which we do. We have encouraged schools of branch management, and those which have been held have been generally successful. We propose to consider the issue of more documents and pamphlets. In general, however, the job of public relations must be done in the districts and branches, and we can only help. If, in any detail, you are not satisfied and will let us know, we will do our best to improve it."

Referring to an amendment by *Devon County* calling on the Council to "provide full information to the press, the B.B.C., and any other medium of publicity," Mr. Bingham said that this was already done whenever it was worth while. But they must not expect too much: "the standards of news value of the press and the B.B.C. are not necessarily the same as ours, and matters which are of enormous interest to NALGO are not always of the same interest to the nation as a whole." But the Council had set up several research panels to consider and report on matters of public interest, and it believed that they would bring the Association's name into the headlines.

Conference adopted both the motion and the Devon amendment, after the President had told it that a statement on the decision on salaries reached in private session the previous day had been sent to the press and broadcast.

Next on the agenda came 17 notices of motion and amendments calling for revision of the Local Government Superannuation Act, and it was with evident confidence—and some relief—that delegates agreed with the suggestion of P. H. HARROLD, honorary solicitor for England, that these should be referred *en bloc* to the N.E.C.

#### NEW EXAMINATION PLANS

##### "Better qualified service"

At this point, delegates turned their attention to the new proposals of the Local Government Examinations Board for the introduction of the entrance examination envisaged in the Charter, and for replacement of the present promotion examination by a clerical examination qualifying for promotion from the General to the Clerical Divisions, and a two-stage Administrative Examination, of which the intermediate would qualify up to A.P.T. IV and the final for promotion into grades beyond A.P.T. IV. These proposals had earlier been approved at a meeting of branch education correspondents and are summarised more fully on page 231. Introducing them to Conference, A. E. ODELL, chairman of the N.E.C. education committee, said that they represented a long-term project, based on the policy of a well-trained and qualified service which had been advocated by the Association and confirmed by Conference from time to time. He therefore invited Conference to consider them as a development of its own policy, rather than as just two more examinations which could not be escaped. The N.E.C. had approved them in principle, with the proviso that it must look carefully at the details before agreeing to their implementation. They had learned much from the promotion examination. It had been useful, but it was not entirely suitable in its present form, and they had therefore tried to evolve a scheme more closely related to the grades in the Charter.

#### Need for safeguards

The proposed division of the examination into clerical and administrative should both provide for the officer who was unable or did not wish to enter the administrative sphere, and help those who intended to qualify for the higher administrative posts. Those who obtained the final certificate would be recognised as equal in status to their professional colleagues in other branches of the service and should have the opportunity to rise to the highest administrative posts. The entrance examination should, in time, provide a reservoir from which future clerical and administrative officers could be drawn.

There were, however, many details still to be considered, and many difficulties to be overcome. Nevertheless, if the local government service was to secure the best people in the future, they must define the goal at which they were aiming. The N.E.C. agreed on the need to safeguard the position of those officers who had

already obtained a promotion examination certificate, who were studying for it, or who, by reason of age and circumstances, could not be expected to enter for the examination. In conclusion, Mr. Odell claimed that the proposals should help to enhance the prestige of the administrative officer and, most important, should strengthen the Association in its claim for proper salaries and service conditions for a well trained and qualified service.

This view was promptly challenged by R. J. LEWIS, *Glamorgan*, who, in the name of his branch and the *South Wales and Monmouthshire district committee*, moved that Conference strongly deprecate the introduction of a further promotion examination as a qualification for promotion to grades above clerical officer. The proposed administrative examinations, he declared, would worsen Charter conditions for thousands of officers. They represented an attempt to turn the local government service into a super civil service, but without its opportunities and rewards. The examinations could not raise the status of the service, because they had no standing outside it; they would not create a single additional A.P.T. post, but would merely give the man who devoted three to five years to evening study priority in an already long queue; they would get nobody any further than he could get to-day by ability and experience, while, outside the service, they could get nobody anywhere; and they would limit the field of selection, to the detriment of the service.

#### "Experience more important"

The chief education officer of Kent had recently deprecated the undue importance which was being attached to examination test papers and suggested that more attention should be given to the more practical significance of breadth of non-scholastic knowledge, appearance, habits, and sociability. But these examinations would deprive officers of the opportunity to use their leisure profitably and to make social contacts at the most suitable age. Finally, they ran counter to the advice of the Hadow Committee, which had stressed that any examination for the local government service, should be at a fairly low level, that there should be only one stage to it, and that a man's experience and record were more important than examination results.

W. J. HARRIS, *Glamorgan branch*, seconding, complained that the statement on the proposals made no mention of the safeguards of which Mr. Odell had spoken. Would those safeguards be obtained and, if they were not, what would be the effect on members in the higher clerical or lower A.P.T. grades? It would mean that men with 15 or 20 years' service would have to embark on some years of study before they could improve their positions.

While agreeing that the new examinations would benefit the 50 or 55 per cent. of members in the General Division—for whom the present promotion examination was ridiculous—Mr. Harris suggested that

this benefit would only be gained at the sacrifice of the remaining 90,000 above the General Division. Administrative ability was created by the effect of years of experience on innate qualities, and examination qualifications would do nothing to provide it.

J. W. GREEN, *East Ham*, speaking as a member of a branch which had had an "education complex" for 30 years, saw no merit in the scheme, which was simultaneously lowering the standard of entry and raising the standard of promotion. Why, with all the existing examinations in the service, add something which would be unrecognised outside it? The man who passed the treas-



"R.I.P." suggested a delegate

urer's examination could put the letters I.M.T.A. after his name—but what would the man who passed the final of the proposed administrative examination put after his name? "R.I.P." suggested a delegate, amid a roar of laughter.

#### Pledge to employers

Replying to the debate, not for the N.E.C., but as a member of the Local Government Examinations Board, N. W. BINGHAM said that the proposals were bound to have serious repercussions on service conditions. The promotion examination, post-entry training, and the guarantee to establish a qualified service, were all part of the bargain made with the employers when the Charter was agreed in 1946, although, hitherto, all had been so heavily engaged on other aspects of the Charter that less attention had been paid to them and their effects. NALGO had accepted the promotion examination and if it wanted to alter it, that could only be done by agreement with the employers. So far, all NALGO had done was to seek exemptions for different groups of members, a process which was hardly likely to impress the employers with the Association's sincerity. In the past year, the problem had been carefully considered in the light of views expressed at the 1949 Conference. The new scheme met nearly all the points which had been raised and at the same time provided a pattern for the future, on which they could base claims for increased salaries and better service conditions.

Having accepted the principle of a promotion examination—and while they might doubt the efficacy of examinations

as tests for anything, they were part of the accepted standard—could they accept less than that the officer applying for a higher post should have a knowledge of English and some knowledge of local government, which was all the proposed new promotion examination from the General Division asked? The intermediate administrative examination, on the other hand, was put forward as the standard qualification for admission to the administrative grades. This meant that those who had passed it would be qualified, not merely for the Clerical Division, but for the administrative side of the service. Above that was the final administrative examination, providing an accepted qualification for the administrative officer, for which NALGO had asked for years.

#### Step to higher salaries

"We are not asking you to agree to every comma of this scheme," Mr. Bingham declared, "but we are consulting you, as the employers are consulting their constituents. Nobody is more concerned with safeguards than I am, and if the safeguards are not satisfactory, I shall not accept the scheme—but you cannot start asking for safeguards and exemptions before you have agreed the principles. I recognise the need to safeguard the position of the married man of many years' service, with family responsibilities, who does not wish to study for an examination which he has hitherto had no reason to anticipate. It would be a breach of faith to require him to obtain the qualification, and you can leave it to us to get the proper safeguards for those officers.

"If you look to the future, I think you must agree that we have here, for the first time, a positive scale of qualifications on which we can base demands for further improvements in salaries and service conditions. The scheme offers the man who is unable to obtain the highest academic qualifications a better prospect than he has had hitherto, while for the officer who can qualify for the highest posts, it offers a qualification which, for the first time, will rank him with professional officers in any other branch of the service.

#### Value of entrance examination

"Behind the criticism of this and other schemes," Mr. Bingham concluded, "there is the feeling, held by a small minority of members, that if they hold on long enough they will get rid of examinations altogether. But we made a bargain with the employers, and if you scrap the qualification parts of the Charter you will scrap the Charter and all that goes with it."

"So far as the entrance examination is concerned, why hesitate? If we have a standard of qualification for entrance which the employers regard as reasonable and they do not get recruits, why should we worry? It is up to the employers to improve salaries and service conditions so as to attract the recruits, and there is no better safeguard for progress in salary and

service conditions policy than insistence on a proper standard of recruitment."

This clear and persuasive argument convinced Conference and, although Mr. Lewis returned to the microphone to point out that his criticism was directed, not at the examination policy as laid down in the Charter, but at the action of the N.E.C. in introducing two additional examinations and in putting the proposals to the employers before submitting them to Conference, it decisively rejected his motion.

#### HOLIDAY CENTRES

##### "August priority for children"

Continuing with the Annual Report, Conference turned next to the holiday centres, with a *Cardiff* motion, proposed by D. LL. JONES, urging that bookings for all the centres during August each year should be allocated first to members with children of school age. Such members, said Mr. Jones, were more or less restricted to August for their holidays and, though himself a bachelor, he considered that they should have priority. His seconder, C. P. CORNISH, *Cardiff*, introducing himself as a married man with a grown-up family, urged that it was the duty of every father present to support the motion.

A *South Wales and Monmouthshire* district amendment to add to the motion the words "as far as practicable," formally moved, was seconded by F. BAINBRIDGE, chairman of the N.E.C. special activities committee responsible for the holiday centres, and himself, he confessed, a married man with two children at school. His committee, he declared, prided itself on doing its best for the children, and would continue to do so, within the limits of accommodation and finance.

#### Later bookings rejected

The amendment was carried, but a further amendment by *Norfolk county*, moved by C. E. BRIDGE, calling on the N.E.C. to accept no bookings for July and August until March 31, was less fortunate. Its intention, Mr. Bridge explained, was to secure that every member had an equal chance of a NALGO holiday. At present, that was impossible, since many, employed by smaller authorities, were unable to fix their holidays by January 1, when bookings opened.

Resisting the amendment, Mr. Bainbridge pointed out that if bookings were not opened until March 31, members would not know whether they could get in until some time in April, by which time it might be too late, should they be unsuccessful, to find accommodation elsewhere. Recognising the force of this argument, Conference rejected the amendment and adopted the motion.

Next, G. BROWN, *Newcastle upon Tyne*, invited Conference to demand the immediate withdrawal from the application form for accommodation at one of the Association's holiday centres of a condition the effect of which, he said, was

to deprive a member suffering injury or damage whilst staying there of his common law right to prosecute a claim for damages against the Association.

This, said Mr. Brown, was a simple, straightforward, but very important matter. If a member staying at a holiday centre sustained a serious injury, as a result of which he might be permanently incapacitated and unable to continue his work, then, as things stood at present, he could look for little sympathy from NALGO, and his plight would inevitably become a matter for the B. & O. committee. No doubt that committee would treat it sympathetically, but should the B. & O. Fund become, in effect, an insurance fund for the special activities department? The department should take out an insurance policy to cover such mishaps. It would cost the Association nothing, since the premium would be passed on to holiday-makers through a slight increase in fees, if that were necessary.

For the N.E.C., P. H. HARROLD explained that the condition referred to had been made on the advice of the Holiday Camps Federation, since its absence might expose the Association to exceptional claims and liabilities. They had had no bad experience, however, and the N.E.C. was prepared to give effect to the motion, should Conference wish, provided it could get adequate insurance cover at a reasonable premium. It must, however, resist the demand for "immediate" withdrawal of the condition, since it needed time to investigate the position. Mr. Brown agreed to withdraw the word "immediate," and Conference adopted the motion, so amended.

#### ASSISTANCE BOARD RULING

##### Prejudicial to B. and O. Fund

From holiday centres, delegates turned to the Benevolent and Orphan Fund, with a *Salisbury* motion, with which it was agreed to incorporate an amendment by *Yorkshire district*, denouncing as a "monstrous imposition" the decision of the National Assistance Board to take account of contributions by benevolent funds in assessing national assistance payments. This decision, the motion declared, discouraged self-help and charity, and it called on the N.E.C. to make strong representations to the National Assistance Board to secure that voluntary payments by such funds should be disregarded in assessing assistance payments.

Moving the motion, K. J. PEARCE said that the policy of the National Assistance Board had a serious effect on the B. & O. Fund, whose expenditure went up by £11,000 last year. Expanding membership of the Association, the effect of which had not yet been felt, was likely to make it increase still further. J. R. CRESSWELL, *Yorkshire district*, formally seconded.

The N.E.C. supported the motion, and it was carried without debate.

There followed a motion by *Glasgow Gas branch*, formally moved by E. S. JOHNSTON, urging that the facilities

of the Association's convalescent home, Knole Lodge, Bournemouth, be made available to the widest circle of members, and instructing the N.E.C., as a means of achieving this, to refund to members going there any third-class rail fare incurred in excess of £3. This motion, Mr. Johnston said, had been accepted by the Provident Society at Aberdeen a year ago, but referred to the N.E.C. When it came before the B. & O. Fund committee, that committee decided that no action be taken, but that members wishing to receive help in respect of travelling expenses should be encouraged to join the Provident Society. In endorsing that decision, the N.E.C. had made it evident that, not for the first time, it was out of touch with members, and ignorant of the rules of the Provident Society, which debarred entrants over 50 years of age—the period after which a man's liability to sickness, and consequently his need for convalescence, increased considerably.

##### "Do not want charity"

When his branch protested to Headquarters, it was told that it was the view of the N.E.C. that the provision of a convalescent home for Northern and Scottish members would save travelling expenses to Knole Lodge. But the provision of a convalescent home in the North was outside the scope of the motion. In respect of it, however, it was stated in the Annual Report that inquiries were being made of other charities and friendly societies, to ascertain whether there were convalescent homes in the North to which members and their dependants could be admitted, and that the Council for the provision of Rest Break Houses for Nurses and Midwives had been approached. Scotland and the North of England, Mr. Johnston declared, did not want charities or midwives' homes for convalescence and recuperation.

While he admired the work of the B. & O. Fund, he feared that some members of its committee had a highly developed "charity complex" and he therefore regretted that the administration of Knole Lodge had been transferred to it. The fare from Glasgow to Bournemouth—£7—and from other places in Scotland and the North, was prohibitive for the young married man in the lower A.P.T. grades or the General Division—70 per cent. of the membership. As a result, the first-class amenities of Knole Lodge—to whose value he paid personal tribute—were enjoyed principally by members in London and the Home and Southern Counties. They should be available to all.

##### Limited subsidy agreed

G. MCVAY, *South Shields*, moved an amendment designed to limit the refund of fare to those to whom payment of the full fare would cause hardship. The object of the B. & O. Fund, he pointed out, was to relieve dire necessity, but the motion as it stood would leave it open to any member to claim a refund of his fare in excess of £3.

For the N.E.C. H. RUSSELL asked

Conference to reject both motion and amendment. It was untrue, he declared, that members in lower A.P.T. grades and the General Division could not go to Knole Lodge because of the cost of travel. Any member of the B. & O. Fund needing to go to Knole Lodge and unable to afford the fees or the fare could be assisted by the Fund, provided his application had the support of his branch. But the Fund was concerned only with members and their dependants who were in distressed circumstances.

Conference rejected the amendment but insisted on adopting the motion after incorporation of an *Acton* amendment limiting the assistance to members themselves.

In respect of the next paragraph of the Annual Report, recording the completion and installation in Knole Lodge of the Roll of Honour on which is inscribed the names of members who lost their lives in the war, J. W. JOHNSTON, *Sheffield*, reminded Conference that, five years ago, it had approved his branch's motion to establish a war memorial. That memorial was now complete and doing marvellous work, which he hoped would benefit members for many years to come. On behalf of his branch, he would like to say "Thank you" to all who had helped to create it (*cheers*).

#### TRIBUTE TO N.E.C.

##### "Finest leaders of any union"

This brought Conference to the end of its examination of the Report and to its annual opportunity to thank the honorary officers and the N.E.C. for their services during the past year. The Report having been unanimously adopted, G. H. BLOOD, *Norfolk Electricity*, moved that Conference express its appreciation of the work of those the Association had elected to serve it. As one who worked very closely with some members of the N.E.C. in the negotiating field, he had been convinced, he said, "that this trade union has the finest leaders of any trade union in this country (*cheers*).

"It is usual on these negotiating bodies," he added, "to come up against and work with other trade unions, and from what I have seen the members of the N.E.C. and the honorary officers of this Association can always take the lead." The cheers which acclaimed this motion, and its unanimous adoption, left no doubt that, whatever their criticism of particular actions or inactions of the Association's governing body, members stood united behind it. Replying to the motion, G. LLEWELYN, Chairman of the Council, said that, though the atmosphere of Conference had sometimes been cool, the motion was an anti-freeze resolution which they gladly accepted. Every member of the N.E.C. had done his or her best to look after the interests of the Association during the past twelve months, and he knew they would continue to do that in the months ahead (*cheers*).

There followed the announcement of the result of the election of the honorary officers and Council for the ensuing year (reported on page 230), after which the new members of the N.E.C. took their seats on the platform.

## CHARTER AMENDMENTS

### "Priority for graduates"

Conference turned next to motions dealing with the local government Charter, of which the first, moved by S. W. PACEY, *West Bridgford*, invited Conference to express concern at the apparent preference being given to university graduates in recent salary recommendations, and instructing the N.E.C. to press in future negotiations for equality of grading irrespective of the type of training undergone.

His branch, Mr. Pacey explained, did not object to the introduction of graduates into the service—it welcomed them—but it did object to the tendency towards "degreeification" of the service, and the admission of men with theoretical training at starting salaries higher than those paid to men who had been in the service for many years. "What we want in local government in the first years," Mr. Pacey concluded, "is not the B.Sc. or the B.Com., but B. Commonsense" (*laughter*).

Opposing the motion for the N.E.C., J. P. PHOENIX said that its adoption would present the negotiators with an impossible task. "Equality of grading irrespective of the type of training undergone" would mean that a man who had done a music course could claim the same rights and privileges as a university-trained youth organiser. In many fields, a university degree was of little use at first, but more useful later, and the employers thought it was needed. If they were to negotiate the best scales for the best men, they must go for the best qualifications. Since the motion failed to find a seconder, it fell without a vote upon it.

### Saturday morning leave

F. A. G. SERVICE followed with a Hackney motion instructing the N.E.C. to press for such amendment of paragraph 9 of the Charter as would provide alternate Saturdays off, without interfering with the 38-hour week. Seconding, L. A. BAILY, *Hackney*, urged Conference not to be led astray by the red herring argument that some officers would be unable to have alternate Saturdays off. As a registration officer, he would be unable to do so himself, since people insisted on being married on Saturday mornings (*laughter*), but he and those in a similar position did not wish to stand in the way of their colleagues who could enjoy the concession sought.

Lindsey county having withdrawn an amendment suggesting one free Saturday in four, C. W. HILL, *Hammersmith*, proposed deletion of the reference to the 38-hour week. If Conference approved the motion, he urged, it should not tie the

hands of their negotiators who, to obtain Saturday morning leave, might have to accept some variation of working hours.

For the N.E.C., J. B. McCANN said that it opposed both motion and amendment, not because it disagreed with the object, but because it disagreed with the suggested means of attaining it. The Charter merely prescribed a 38-hour week, and there was nothing in it to prevent local arrangements for Saturday morning leave. Some local authorities had, in fact, agreed to such arrangements, and it was best that they should be negotiated locally. Conference agreed, rejecting both the motion and the amendment.

### Higher overtime pay

No greater success attended a Leeds motion, seeking amendment of the Charter to secure overtime pay at one-and-a-quarter plain-time rates for all overtime worked. At present, the Charter provides for payment at plain-time rates for the first ten hours of overtime in any one week, with payment at time-and-a-quarter for overtime in excess of ten hours. Moving the motion, E. G. M. HAMLYN said that many officers working both normal and seasonal overtime were getting only plain-time rates. His seconder, J. FIRTH, added that Leeds particularly wanted to give a lift to the juvenile and low-grade members, who, to-day, hardly earned enough to cover the cost of their tea.

Amendments by Rotherham and District Gas, Newark, Gateshead, and Southampton, suggesting variations of the original motion—including the raising of the "ceiling" above which overtime payments are not made—having all been withdrawn, Mr. McCann again strongly opposed for the N.E.C. He was prepared, he said, to say why the N.E.C. opposed, but Conference, conscious of the overriding demand for all-round increases in salary it had already made, evidently agreed that it would be unwise to seek minor improvements, and rejected the motion without further discussion.

For the same reason, Lindsey county's motion, asking that Saturday should not be regarded as a full working day in assessing annual leave, together with an amendment by Plymouth and Poole, suggesting that Saturday morning should be reckoned as a half-day, were also withdrawn.

### Better holiday scale

The N.E.C. did, however, support the following motion from Metropolitan district, condemning the Charter scale of annual leave as inadequate, and requesting the resumption of negotiations for its improvement. Briefly introducing the motion, P. W. ENGLISH explained that his committee had deliberately framed it in wide terms because it appreciated that it would put a very "meaty" problem on the N.E.C.'s plate, and did not wish to give the Council indigestion.

An amendment by Bethnal Green, calling for immediate re-submission of the staff side's original application, was withdrawn, whereupon J. B. PARRY moved the South Wales and Monmouthshire district amendment, seeking for General Division officers the same annual leave as was granted to those in the Miscellaneous Division. To-day, Mr. Parry pointed out, more than half the Association's members were in the General Division, and those with more than ten years' service were still getting only fifteen days' holiday, whereas new entrants to the Miscellaneous and other grades, without previous service or experience, were to get eighteen days after twelve months' service.

From the platform, W. STEELE said that the N.E.C. accepted the Metropolitan motion because it did not seek to tie its hands. The better holiday scales secured in the electricity and gas services, for which the NALGO representatives could claim a major share of the credit, had given the N.E.C. an additional weapon in seeking improvements for the local government service. "Support the motion and give us a free hand," he urged. "We will do what Conference wants as quickly as possible, but I hope we shall not be encumbered by the amendments (*hear, hear*)."

Responding to this appeal, Conference rejected the amendment, consented to the withdrawal of others from Hackney and Derbyshire, seeking a specific scale, and unanimously adopted the Metropolitan motion.

### Paid leave for T.U. work

Also acceptable to the N.E.C. was a Gateshead motion, instructing the Council to seek an amendment to paragraph 12 of the Charter "to ensure that officers attending meetings of provincial councils or other similar joint committees, should be given leave with pay." Moving this, E. J. VARLEY pointed out that, while most local authorities followed this practice, some granted only unpaid leave. Since, in such cases, the branch made up the lost pay, extension of the practice would prove very costly to NALGO. Delegates agreed, adopting the motion without discussion.

Going a step further, D. G. MACINTYRE, Lanarkshire, moved a motion expressing "dismay" at the practice of some local authorities in requiring members attending district committee meetings and Conference to take unpaid leave, or to deduct the time lost from their annual leave, and asking that NALGO should reimburse the salary lost by these members. Hitherto, said Mr. MacIntyre, local authorities had taken a tolerant line towards members attending Association meetings, but, as the Association grew, their attitude was hardening, with the result that many Conference delegates who were also members of district committees lost either ten days' holiday or ten days' pay. "While he, personally,

willingly gave up his holiday, branches found that the sacrifice discouraged the younger men they wanted from taking branch office. Most trade unions reimbursed their delegates for loss of wages, and NALGO must face this problem.

"But the N.E.C. opposed both the motion and a Southampton amendment instructing it to negotiate for paid leave. Its spokesman, J. B. McCANN, while regretting the attitude of those local authorities which did not grant leave with pay, protested that the Association could not afford to make up the pay lost. "We believe," he said, "that members should make some sacrifice, and should be prepared, where paid leave is not granted, to give up part of their annual leave. This motion might raise an issue you might subsequently regret. There is an increasing tendency to say that attendance at trade union meetings—and NALGO is not the only one—should be at the expense of the employer, and we believe it would be most unwise to raise the matter."

"Cries of support came from the floor, and, after Southampton had withdrawn its amendment, the motion was rejected."

## MOTOR CAR ALLOWANCES

### History of negotiations

J. L. COWLAM, Kesteven, followed with a motion calling on the N.E.C., in view of the increase in motoring costs, to take immediate steps to obtain an increase in the motor car allowances for local government officers. Moving formally, Mr. Cowlam reserved his right to speak after hearing the N.E.C. statement. In this, G. R. ASHTON told Conference that, in June last year, the staff side had claimed an increase in the allowances set out in the Charter. The National Joint Council referred the claim to a special sub-committee, which in turn consulted two experts appointed by the I.M.T.A. and the County Accountants' Society. The experts reported that, in their view, there was no case for general alteration of the rates, but that there was a case for those who used older cars upon which more had to be spent on repairs.

The sub-committee reported to the April meeting of the N.J.C., which agreed to increase the annual allowance for cars up to and including 10 h.p. by one-twelfth in the case of those between seven and ten years old, and by a further one-twelfth in the case of those more than ten years old, and in addition to provide a new scale for cars exceeding 12 h.p. This, however, was not satisfactory, because it did not carry any increase in the mileage rate.

The day before the N.J.C. met, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced the increase of 9d. a gallon in the price of petrol. Stressing that this called for urgent action, the staff side pressed for an immediate decision on a further increase. While the employers would not agree to this, they referred the problem to the sub-committee with power to act. The sub-committee again consulted

the experts, who quoted an A.A. statement that the increase in the price of petrol represented 1d. a mile for cars up to 10 h.p., and ½d. a mile for cars over 10 h.p., and suggested that, since the basic ration had been increased, thus allowing an officer to make greater use of his car for private motoring, he ought to make a larger contribution towards the running cost. The staff side disagreed with this view, and also pointed out that there had been a previous increase of 2½d. in the price of

be resumed. But the N.E.C. and the staff side remained convinced that there was a good case for complete revision of the rates, and were determined to prove it as soon as they had sufficient information. In these circumstances, he suggested that the motion should be withdrawn. The Council opposed an amendment by the River Trent Catchment Board branch urging restoration of the guaranteed annual minimum payment plus a mileage rate according to horse power, because it proposed a return to the arrangement that operated when no mileage was allowed to the officer who ran his car entirely for business purposes.

Mr. Cowlam agreed to withdraw his motion, while hoping that future negotiations would be conducted with more speed, and the amendment consequently fell.

## CONDITIONS IN OFFICES

### Call for statutory code

There was general sympathy, from both floor and platform, with the next motion from the West Midland district committee and Birmingham, asking the N.E.C. "to discuss, with other federations representing non-industrial workers, ways and means of obtaining the immediate enactment of a statutory code, similar to that set up for factories, including such matters as proper working space, ventilation, lighting, underground rooms, washing facilities, etc."

Moving this, P. V. HOPE, Birmingham, reminded Conference that the Association had already called for legislation to safeguard the health and welfare of office workers, and, with other trade unions, had given evidence to a Committee of Inquiry on the subject in 1947 which had agreed unanimously that suitable measures should be introduced. He wanted the N.E.C. to press for its introduction as early as possible.

After E. C. R. CHINN, N.E.C., had said that the Council was willing to discuss staff welfare with any other body, Conference approved the motion.

## CHARTER AS A MINIMUM Earlier policy reiterated

Next, J. BESSERMAN moved a Coventry motion inviting Conference to reiterate the policy laid down in 1948 to regard the Charter as a minimum. His branch, he said, knew well—for it had often been told so by the N.E.C.—that the employers were not prepared to accept the Charter as a minimum. Nevertheless, Conference had from time to time expressed the view that it should be regarded as a minimum, notwithstanding the difficulty of getting the employers to agree. The motion did not ask the N.E.C. to do anything: its object was to obtain a declaration of policy from Conference. Up and down the country the Charter was in practice accepted as a minimum, and many local staff joint committees operated on that basis, trying to secure improvements upon it. N.E.C. spokesmen had often advised Conference that particular matters should

## The Local Government



"The Council decided to give Mr. Berry sole right to graze on this land."

Sent by Miss E. STEAD, Swinton.

petrol since the allowances were fixed. The employers, however, would agree only to an increase of 1d. a mile for cars up to 10 h.p., and ½d. a mile for bigger cars, such increase not to apply to the first 3,600 miles. This the staff side considered most unfair, especially to the officers running a small mileage and, though the sub-committee had power to act, refused to agree, preferring to take the matter to the full Council. The N.J.C. Executive met the following day, and at that meeting the staff side asked for the increases of 1d. and ½d. a mile for the full mileage run. When the employers rejected this, the staff side asked for 1d. a mile increase for all cars, regardless of horse power, but the employers would not move from the experts' recommendations. Appreciating that failure to reach any agreement might leave officers without any relief for months, the staff side decided to follow the old trade union precept of "When you come up against a blank wall, take what you can get and come back again for another fight," and they eventually agreed to accept the employers' offer, at the same time recording their dissatisfaction with it and warning the employers that they would seek a general review of the allowances as soon as they could collect more information about the position throughout the country. Headquarters was now collecting that information.

Since then, petrol rationing had been abolished, thus further changing the setting in which the negotiations would have to

be negotiated at a local level, but that could be done only if the Charter were considered to be a minimum. Since, therefore, the Association, in its day-to-day work, recognised the Charter as a minimum, Coventry asked Conference to reaffirm that position by a declaration of policy (*cheers*).

Replying for the N.E.C., G. T. BELTON reminded delegates that they had made this a statement of policy in 1948, but that in 1949 the N.E.C. had come back to them with a fair and honest statement, pointing out the difficulties. The Aberdeen Conference had accepted that statement and nothing had happened since to justify a change of mind.

#### "A national standard"

"It has never been the policy of NALGO," he said, "that the Charter is a minimum. We fought for many years for standard conditions, and we regard this as a national standard. We warn you that, to depart from that position will create danger, for all who are engaged in negotiations know that, once you start asking for something in an upward direction, it is perfectly logical for the other side to ask for something in the opposite direction."

Section 23(d) of the Charter, Mr. Belton continued, provided that the salary of an officer might be increased by more than the normal scale increment, on grounds of special merit or ability, and those who negotiated at local level could make use of that provision, and Coventry could do that. Yet, according to the recent survey of grading made by the National Joint Council, whereas, taking county boroughs as a whole, 30·1 per cent. of men officers and 80·8 per cent. of women officers were in the General Division, in Coventry the percentages were 38·3 men and 86·2 women. The position was similar in the Clerical and Higher Clerical Divisions: for example, whereas for all county boroughs 2·3 per cent. of the staff were in the Clerical Division, Coventry had only 1·7 per cent. there. Why did they not tackle the problem locally, instead of keeping on coming to Conference with this "Charter as a minimum" business? In his own authority, a small one with a population of about 50,000, there were no male officers in the General Division. He asked Conference to reject the motion.

#### Coventry's achievements

Taking up the challenge with gusto, Mr. Besserman replied that, while the Coventry staff joint committee still had much to do, it had, with the co-operation of the employers, secured considerable improvements on the Charter, which was, in fact, regarded as a minimum locally. For example, all men in the General Division received double increments at the ages of 21 and 26, thus achieving the maximum of the scale at 30 instead of 32 (*cheers*). That was something the staff joint committee had done which

the N.E.C. had failed to do (*hear, hear*).

In addition, they had in Coventry an excellent local long service bonus scheme. After a minimum of five years' service from the age of 21 onwards, everyone received 3s. a week; after ten years, 6s.; after 15 years, 9s.; and after 20 years, 12s. This bonus was paid to men and women in all grades up to and including Grade VIII (*cheers*).

Again, they had an extra day's holiday after each statutory bank holiday, giving four additional days' annual leave (*cheers*) plus three days' special leave, with pay, at the discretion of the chief officer, to attend such functions as grandmothers' funerals (*laughter*).

Also, through the staff joint committee, they had secured improvements for the Association itself: the branch had its own office which the council had given it rent free (*hear, hear*).

"Lastly," he continued, "we have arranged with the council that subscriptions should be deducted at source from salaries, and all subscriptions are thus paid in one cheque by the city treasurer to the branch office. These improvements have been possible only because, in Coventry, the Charter has been regarded as a minimum. Other branches might achieve the same results but they will be helped if the Association comes out with a declaration of policy to this effect."

This recital of achievement was too much for envious delegates, who promptly adopted the motion with acclamation.

#### TAX-FREE "WEIGHTING"

#### "Hopeless" request

As a result, the next motion, by *Coventry* and *Middlesex*, instructing the N.E.C. to authorise and encourage branches to negotiate local improvements in the Charter, was automatically referred to the N.E.C., and Conference turned to a *Middlesex* motion, asking the N.E.C. to consult with other trade unions, who had negotiated salary scales on a national basis, with a view to establishing with the Treasury that "weighting," since it was payment for additional expenses, was not income, and should not be taxed. Moving this, L. T. SAUNDERS suggested that it be referred to the N.E.C. for consideration and report.

But G. T. BELTON, while confessing that the N.E.C. sympathised, opposed the motion on the ground that it was impracticable and a waste of time. Could they imagine what the Chancellor of the Exchequer would say to it? (*cries of "yes"*). "Weighting" could not be differentiated from salary, since both were payments to meet the employee's living costs. There were plenty of legal decisions going against stronger cases than this, and there was no hope of influencing the Treasury in their favour. Conference agreed, rejecting the motion.

*Tottenham* followed with a motion calling for the deletion from the Charter of Clause 24, prescribing a system of annual

reports on each officer, with the object of assessing qualifications on a common standard. Moving this, L. E. ABEL said that his branch objected to the system of annual reports mainly because it considered assessment to a common standard of the qualifications enumerated on the model report form laid down by the National Joint Council to be impossible. You could not measure personality as you could measure a pound of tea. When to this difficulty was added the fact that there were often several certifying officers in one department, and many for an authority as a whole, it became clear that the possibility of achieving a common standard was remote indeed.

Annual reports, Mr. Abel concluded, had failed to fulfil the purpose for which they were intended, and though, perhaps, logical in theory, were unsatisfactory in practice.

Seconding, H. H. COOPER, *Tottenham*, said that the annual report appeared to serve no useful purpose at Tottenham, and his branch had heard of no great advantage from it nationally.

#### "Iniquitous" clause

Supporting, E. G. SWAN, *Hertfordshire*, declared with emphasis that the clause dealing with annual reports was "the most iniquitous in the Charter" (*hear, hear*). They could not achieve uniformity before first obtaining reports on the departmental heads and their ability to write reports (*laughter*). Further, the use made of the reports was most unfair. He knew of one man who had consistently received an adverse report, yet, when he left the authority, he was given a first-class testimonial (*laughter*). That was dishonest. When the clerk of the council or the head of the department received a request for promotion to a vacancy, he normally called for the reports. If they were adverse, he turned the man down—but if they were good, he ignored them (*laughter*).

H. W. WAYMAN, *London (Southern Electricity)*, made the additional point that annual reports could do great harm to a local government officer transferred to a nationalised industry. "From my experience," he added—*amid cheers suggesting that many delegates had shared it*—"many senior officers use annual reports as an antidote to a bad liver condition."



"Antidote to a bad liver condition"

Finally, J. M. ANDERSON, *Glasgow*, told delegates that, in Scotland, the employers had refused to have anything to do with annual reports, regarding them as unnecessary and an insult to the staffs.

### Protection for officers

Undaunted by this unanimity of criticism, A. E. NORTROP, *N.E.C.*, asked Conference to reject the motion. The good officer had no need to worry about the system, he said. In any event, local authorities were entitled to have annual reports if they wished, and they would probably still get them even if the paragraph were removed from the Charter. But so long as the paragraph remained, officers were protected, since it entitled them to see an adverse report; if they did not see a report, they knew that they were progressing satisfactorily. The form of report in the Charter was only a model and many authorities had not adopted that particular form. He was unimpressed with the story of the man who got a good testimonial after a series of adverse reports; they all knew that testimonials were often given to a man to get rid of him (*laughter*).

M. W. HOWARD, *Middlesex*, moved an amendment which, while retaining the annual report system, sought a provision to entitle every officer to see his report before it went to the establishment committee. It was not good enough, he argued, that the officer should be allowed—as the Charter provided—to see only an adverse report. He should also see a good one, so that he might know that his conduct and general progress were appreciated, and gain some incentive therefrom.

### "Nothing to worry about"

But Mr. Nortrop again opposed on behalf of the *N.E.C.*. It was unnecessary, he argued, for the officer to see a good report; so long as he got his increments, he had nothing to worry about. The *N.E.C.* did not feel strongly on this particular point, but it did not want to go to the National Joint Council to ask for the deletion or amendment of the clause.

Conference rejected the amendment, but this decision did not deter MRS. A. C. HITCHMAN, *Southend-on-Sea*, from pressing a further amendment seeking to extend the annual report system to all officers, other than chief officers (at present local authorities are entitled to waive it in respect of those earning more than £560 a year), and to provide that officers should see their reports, whether good or bad. In her own authority, she said, officers were getting not a bad report and not a good report, but something in the middle. But the next report might be a little worse, and before they knew where they were, they were out. Had they been able to see their reports, they would have been able to do better. It was unjust that the man who had got into a higher division should be able to sit back uncriticised

while the man on a lower salary had to be on his toes all the time, trying to please somebody possibly only a little way ahead of him.

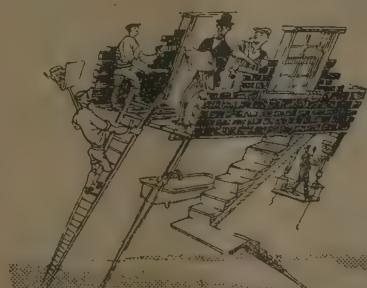
But, although Conference applauded the spirit of Mrs. Hitchman and her seconder, MISS E. M. HOLLAND, it rejected the amendment and, subsequently, the original motion.

### PROMOTION EXAM. AGAIN

Further deferment urged

Moving formally his branch's motion instructing the *N.E.C.* to obtain the deletion from the Charter of paragraph 28 (making only officers who have passed the promotion examination or its equivalent eligible for promotion from the General Division) F. A. G. SERVICE, *Hackney*, explained that, although the motion was no longer opportune, in view of the earlier decision on examination policy, he wished to give a hearing to his friends from Tottenham and Ealing, who thought there was a valid point in their amendments.

Tottenham's amendment, moved by H. H. COOPER, suggested deletion of the clause until the national entrance examination had been operating for one year. Its intention, he explained, was to ensure that they did not start building upon the second floor of staff structure before the ground floor was in. When the time came for the Association and the



"Building the second floor before the ground floor was in"

*N.E.C.* to formulate the promotion and administrative examinations of the future, it was to be hoped that they would not try to operate the new promotion examination until the new entrance examination was working effectively.

Ealing had tabled a further amendment seeking action to prevent local authorities recruiting unqualified officers into posts above the General Division, while requiring their own officers to be qualified before they could be promoted. The *N.E.C.*, said A. E. NORTROP, sympathised with this, but opposed the original motion and the Tottenham amendment. In view of the new examinations policy, he asked that all be withdrawn, on the understanding that the Ealing amendment would be taken into consideration in any new arrangements for the promotion examination. In view of this assurance,

D. R. WOODMAN, *Ealing*, withdrew his amendment, and Conference rejected the motion and the Tottenham amendment.

Also withdrawn was a *Kidderminster and District* motion, suggesting amendment of paragraph 29 of the Charter dealing with monetary grants in recognition of examination successes, with the result that a *Haslemere* amendment, which had sought to make the payment of grants obligatory instead of permissive, fell.

The last motion on the Charter, from *Leeds*, deplored the attitude of the Association of Municipal Corporations in seeking to restrict free mobility within the service, and instructing the *N.E.C.* to "take up the question of the giving of references and the short-listing of officers with all local authorities," was referred, without debate, to the *N.E.C.* for consideration and report.

### INSURANCE OF OFFICERS

Risk of personal injury

Though it was still early on the final day, Conference now entered the last lap—a small group of miscellaneous motions related neither to the Annual Report nor to the Charter. First of these, from *Wallingford*, called on the *N.E.C.* to seek "adequate insurance protection by employing authorities of all officers who, by personal contact with the public, are exposed to personal injury, or injury to their property, and that such provision be made a compulsory condition of service."

The *N.E.C.* asked that the motion and its amendments—seeking to extend the provision to all officers and to the nationalised industries—be referred to it for consideration and report. While agreeing to this course, J. C. BROWNE, *Wallingford*, urged it to take stronger action than it had done in the past. At present, he explained, if a rent collector were injured on duty, he would get his pay plus national health insurance, but if his injury were so bad that he was unable to work, he would get only his pension, which would be very small unless he had been in the service a long time, and would be left more or less to the charity of his employing authority. Local authorities had power to insure their officers, but few had done it, and he hoped the *N.E.C.* would speed things up. The motion and amendments were referred to the *N.E.C.*

### ELECTRICITY ADMINISTRATION Call for inquiry

There followed a spirited debate on a motion from *Bristol Electricity*, instructing the *N.E.C.* "to examine the structure, administration, and policy of the British Electricity Authority and area boards, with a view to increasing efficiency and considering whether the best interests of consumers and employees are being served under the existing administration." Moving this in a carefully prepared and ably

delivered speech, C. R. GIBSON expressed surprise that the N.E.C. should oppose it, since it had already decided to appoint a research panel to examine the structure and administration of the nationalised and regionalised services.

His branch committee, he explained, was concerned at the way in which some of the electricity boards were operating. It took the view that members of NALGO, had a direct responsibility to the public, the consumers, to ensure that they were given the best possible service (*hear, hear!*). Before nationalisation, the 60 per cent. of the undertakings in municipal hands were subject to democratic control through the elected representatives of the people, but such protection no longer existed. The Consumers' Consultative Councils which had been set up provided no real control by consumers, and gave them no power to check the manner in which the boards were operating.

#### Risk of bureaucracy

The boards had failed to show that better attitude towards the staff for which they had hoped. In Bristol, anybody who came from the Allied Control Commission in Germany, from UNRRA, or from certain Ministries, got a good job, but the former staff stayed put.

Compulsory transfers, though dealt with through the negotiating machinery, were nothing less than direction of labour. It was necessary to prove hardship—and the loss of £1 a week in travelling expenses was not necessarily considered hardship—before a transferred officer could be certain of six months' compensation.

There was great danger of bureaucracy creeping in, and increasing centralisation, in which the interests of the consumers were not being served. For example, the whole of the accountancy system of the south-west was being centralised with two main billing centres in Bristol and Plymouth. If a consumer went, say, to the Bath office to make some inquiries, the office had to telephone to Bristol. That was not the sort of contact they wanted with the consumer, or the sort of service they wanted to give him.

#### "Cræze for statistics"

They were also concerned because the South West Electricity Board had recently announced a curtailment of its programme for the development of rural areas, because of cuts in capital expenditure. In the branch's view, the boards had launched a tremendous commercial drive to boost revenue and had, in fact, dissipated their capital, with the result that the farmers could not now get the services for which they had hoped.

The board was also developing a "tremendous cræze" for statistics. It was as much as the staff could do to get through their work and get out the annual report, without supplying all the extra statistics demanded (*hear, hear!*). A good

department had been built up, but it was doubtful whether it served any useful purpose.

In conclusion, Mr. Gibson emphasised that his branch wanted the best possible service for the consumer, and the best public relations. It was not good public relations for the board to announce a trading loss of £106,000 when, in fact, the trading accounts showed a profit of £290,000, the loss being due to interest payable to the central authority.

#### "Consult rank and file"

These points were only a few of many which could have been brought forward, but he thought they were enough to demonstrate the need for the research panel to investigate policy as well as administration and structure. "But," he warned, "do not fall into the trap of thinking that all the experts are at the top. If you talk to the top-line officials, they will tell you a very good story. But go down amongst the rank and file, the people who have to apply this policy, who have intimate personal contact with the consumers and know what the consumers are saying. If you do that, I think that you will find you will produce a much better report."

But, though delegates cheered this able and—for a NALGO Conference—unusual excursion beyond the domestic field, the following speakers showed that Mr. Gibson had little support among his service colleagues. R. L. GIBBS, *Newbury Area, Southern Electricity*, protested that such inquiry was premature, since reorganisation was still going on, and the results would not be seen for two years. Moreover, NALGO had no mandate to interfere, and if it did, it would only look silly.

#### "Not in NALGO's province"

R. RILEY, *Manchester*, suggested that acceptance of the motion would involve the Association in unlimited inquiry. What about the health services, or the local government service? NALGO's job was to improve the service conditions of its members: the consumers could look after themselves. There was a constitutional way of dealing with this question—not this "blathering" method of asking NALGO to do something which was not within its province (*cheers*).

H. W. WAYMAN, *London (Southern) Electricity*, while agreeing that much of what Mr. Gibson had said was true, urged him to curb his youthful impetuosity and be patient. As an elected member of an advisory council, he believed that it was a comprehensive body, dealing meticulously with the matters raised in the motion, and able, eventually, to remove these grievances.

Supporting Bristol, J. ROBERTSON, *Glasgow and District Health Service*, contended that NALGO members had a contribution to make, but the present organisation of the services made it impos-

sible for them to influence administration. Conference had a responsibility to see that the consumers' councils worked. Nationalisation had had repercussions within the Association, and it was bound to have external repercussions also.

Also supporting, J. FARMER, *Southampton and District Electricity*, told Conference that in some small areas the price of electricity had increased on January 1, 1949, by 125 per cent., and 18 months later, houses on one side of a street were paying 2d. a unit more than houses, supplied by the same service, over the same power lines on the other.

J. C. BROWNE, *Wallingford*, after telling Mr. Farmer that the point he had raised was being looked into, suggested that, while Conference should not interfere with administration, it should watch the interests of the staff during reorganisation. They were told very little of what was going on and could not even get information from their local staff committees.

#### Council for staff problems

At this stage, the President said he had received an emergency amendment from Hayes and Harlington suggesting deletion from the motion of the references to increasing efficiency and to the interests of consumers, confining it to examination of the interests of employees, but Conference refused to consider the amendment, preferring instead to hear L. W. G. HETHERINGTON wind up for the N.E.C. Opposing the motion, he said that NALGO's first duty was to be a trade union. There were consumers' councils to look after the interests of the consumers. During the coming year, NALGO's leaders in the electricity supply field had to give effect to a Charter and would find their hands full. The service had the most complete system of co-operation between staff and employers of any industry, with a national advisory council to deal with safety, health, welfare, efficiency, training, and education. That council, which operated at local, district, and national levels, could handle any staff problem. For these reasons, policy had been deliberately omitted from the terms of reference of the proposed research panel.

#### Interests of consumers

Claiming his right of reply, Mr. Gibson said that discussion in his branch had begun from the basic trade union function of defending the interests of their members. But from that point they advanced to a wider field, and, remembering the N.E.C.'s public relations policy, had decided to extend their motion to include consumers. "Let no one be misled about the consumers' councils!" he added. "Every member should ask himself one question: 'Do I know the members of the Consumers' Consultative Council in my own area?' (*cries of 'do you?'*). I have taken some interest in the affairs of the electricity industry," Mr. Gibson confessed, "but I have to admit that, in my

own area, of 19 members appointed by the Minister, I know the names of only one. If we who take an interest in these affairs do not know, what about the man in the street? Does he know to whom he has to go to get things put right?"

Conference, however, was not to be drawn, and rejected the motion.

### OFFICERS IN CIVIL DEFENCE "Conscription" opposed

Even more lively was the following discussion on a motion by Ealing instructing the N.E.C. to take all possible steps to prevent the conscription of local government officers into civil defence except as part of a scheme applying to all sections of the population, with which its mover, R. SIMON, incorporated a Stepney amendment seeking "adequate protection" of the positions of officers conscripted. The motion, said Mr. Simon, expressed the widespread resentment of officers at the Government's assumption of power to conscript local government officers for civil defence while leaving the rest of the population to volunteer, notwithstanding the good service given voluntarily by local government officers in the last war. The N.E.C. had protested against this when the Civil Defence Act was introduced in 1948, but had secured only a minor amendment, limiting conscription to such branches of civil defence work as were an extension of the officer's normal duties. Since then, the Home Secretary had promised to apply voluntary methods first, but a resolution from Conference would be a useful reminder to him to keep his pledge.

#### "Inimical policies"?

The cheers which greeted this speech suggested that Conference was disposed to agree, but W. J. HARRIS, Glamorgan, speaking as an individual delegate, swung it from approval to opposition. In the last war, he said, the local government service had done a magnificent job in organising the populace—the people it served—in the protection of their lives and property. To-day they were faced with an even greater need—to organise the people against more ghastly forms of warfare, to enrol them into a body which could face even greater trials and tribulations than those they had triumphed over between 1939 and 1945.

"To whom should the Government turn?" Mr. Harris asked, "but to the people who organised that magnificent service in the last war? Are we, as local government officers, as servants of the public, going to say: 'We are not going to be ready and prepared to create that machine into which you can be organised until all of you come into it, too'?"

"During this Conference," he continued, "I have been struck by certain significant things. I am not happy in my own mind as to the sincerity of some of the motions which have been put before you (hear, hear!). Is this Conference being used not for the purpose for which we are



"Struck by certain significant things."

gathered here—the protection of the interests of the members of NALGO—but as a sounding board for the dissemination of the objects, the views, and the beliefs of a certain party, a party inimical to the country in which we live and whose policies and beliefs are inimical to us as members of NALGO?" (loud cheers).

G. DIXON, North Western and North Wales, said it was evident that Mr. Harris had sensed the feeling of Conference (hear, hear!). NALGO prided itself on being a non-political trade union, and he was doubtful of the origin of this motion. The Minister had given an undertaking that nothing more would be done until he had again consulted NALGO. What more did they want?

#### "Contribution to peace"

Defending the motion, A. BLUE, Glasgow Gas, deplored the suggestion that the agenda was being used for purposes other than that for which it was intended (hear, hear!). This was a grievous reflection on their friends from Ealing. It also cast a grievous reflection on the N.E.C., whose immediate reaction to the Civil Defence Bill had been to protest as Ealing was protesting. If they condemned Ealing, they were also condemning, as advocates of a certain political line, the members of the N.E.C.

If a third world war were to come, NALGO members would not be unaffected. It was their duty to take every possible step to ensure that the danger of war was removed from the world. The British people were not afraid of war when it came—but the fact that the Government was not getting the recruits it wanted for civil defence and the Territorial Forces proved that the people realised that these things were no solution to the problem.

"Do not allow this red herring to be dragged in now," Mr. Blue appealed. "Let us discuss this on its merits, decide whether we want peace, and as a first step—as a positive contribution to achieving it—adopt this motion."

#### "Drawn by the nose"

If the thin applause which greeted Mr. Blue were insufficient indication of the view of Conference, that view was emphatically demonstrated by the roar of

approval which greeted J. SUTCLIFFE, Westminster, as he castigated "this paity, mean, and commonplace motion."

"Once already this week," he declared, "I have seen and heard Conference being drawn by the nose by certain gentlemen who—seizing upon one or two minor discontents and using their undoubted powers of oratory—persuaded their hearers to request action which will result in even greater discontent; and that is exactly what these orators desire (cheers). But Conference is not over, and there is still time for us, as sensible, level-headed Britishers, to change our minds, particularly on this motion."

#### "Give nation a lead"

"To whom else and where else did our bewildered citizens turn in those evil dark days of the last war than to their much-maligned town hall?" Mr. Sutcliffe asked. "If those days return, to whom else will they call for help but to us? And we will give it, I know, should the occasion arise (cheers). There is no reason why we should not be prepared."

"Acceptance of this motion, even by the N.E.C., will reflect great discredit on the Association. If recruits are slow in coming forward for civil defence, it is because a lead has not been given. I suggest that no Conference and no Association is better suited than are we to give a lead to the citizens or to pledge our wholehearted support to the Minister, so that, should the time arrive—and I hope it will not—we shall be ready. I appeal to you," Mr. Sutcliffe concluded, amid ringing cheers, "as local government officers, but principally as British gentlemen, to give this lead by rejecting this motion."

#### "Insinuations resented"

Conference was by now thoroughly roused, and it was with some impatience that it heard Mr. Simon again, in defence of his branch. The motion, he said, had been approved unanimously by a well-attended meeting of the executive committee and he was sure that they would resent very strongly the insinuations which had been made against them (hear, hear!). He had always understood that NALGO was not concerned with politics, and he had not noticed any attempt to introduce politics into the Conference. The speakers against the motion seemed to have missed the point, which was that there was no need to conscript local government officers into civil defence, since they would always volunteer. That was merely a reaffirmation of the N.E.C.'s own policy, and he would be content for the motion to be referred to the Council.

But Conference would not allow even this, insisting upon taking a vote and throwing out the motion by an overwhelming majority.

The next motion, by Heston and Isleworth, provided a striking illustration of the power of the individual member in NALGO, and of the determination of

Conference to uphold it. The motion modestly invited Conference to express the view that there was no objection to the salary scales applicable to NALGO staff, though not details of individual salaries, being supplied to any branch wanting them, and its mover, L. R. GRAY, explained that its origin was both simple and innocent. A member of his branch, noticing from advertisements in "L.G.S." that the Association scale of salaries differed from that applicable to local government officers, had asked the branch executive for further information. The executive instructed the branch secretary to find out, but, to their surprise, when he wrote to Headquarters, he was told that the N.E.C. refused to give this information.

"Now we really were in trouble," Mr. Gray continued, amid laughter. "The N.E.C. refused to tell us—but the member still wanted to know. We had been given no adequate reason for the N.E.C.'s attitude, we could see no harm in it giving the information, so we took the matter to the district committee, where we received overwhelming support.

"We have never asked for details of the salaries paid to individuals. We asked simply for the salary scales. We still ask for that information, for the satisfaction of an ordinary member who, whatever else he has done, has certainly discovered a way of making Heston and Isleworth NALGO conscious. I regret having to trouble Conference with this—but I must, because Conference is the Parliament of the Association and we have no other redress. I hope that you will support the motion, that the N.E.C. will relent, and that my branch will be able to resume its belief in the democratic nature of NALGO."

#### "Members entitled to know"

Seconding, J. GARDNER, Stepney, confessed that neither he nor his branch wanted to know the salary scales of Headquarters' staff; but they considered that if any branch or individual member asked for that information, he should be given it (*hear, hear!*). All agreed that NALGO's staff did a grand job (*hear, hear!*). If their salaries scale was poor, the N.E.C. should do something about it quickly. If it was good, they should be proud of it and not mind who knew it. If the N.E.C. regarded the scale as a matter for it alone, that was no reason why it should not be disclosed. No one questioned the right of the N.E.C. to decide these matters, nor wanted NALGO salaries and service conditions discussed in public. But no branch or member should be denied information about them.

After W. KENYON, Liverpool, had pointed out that the information would be helpful to branches employing paid assistance, and W. J. ATKINSON, London Executive Council (Health Service), had suggested that, since members paid the Association's staff they were

entitled to know what they were paying, MISS H. M. MONAGHAN, Dunbartonshire, raised a lone voice in defence of the N.E.C. The motion was unworthy, she declared. If it were passed, then any ratepayer might write to her town clerk asking what salary she received.

#### Staff Association's fear

Opposing the motion for the N.E.C., W. STROTHER disclosed that although Mr. Gray had not said so, the branch, in its letter to the General Secretary, had said that it wanted the information "for comparison purposes." The NALGO Staff Association had suggested that this could only mean that the branch, having studied the scales, would wish to maintain either that the N.E.C. should pay its staff on the Charter scales or that, if it agreed to better scales, those scales should become its objective for NALGO members. But the staff claimed the right to free negotiation with the N.E.C. and did not wish to be bound by N.J.C. decisions. This had been conceded. The Staff Association had suggested that disclosure of staff scales might make the N.E.C. reluctant to grant the staff better scales than it was able to negotiate in the N.J.C., with consequent damage to the principle of free negotiation (*cries of "No!" and "Vote!"*). NALGO staff were not employed by the Association as a whole but by the N.E.C., just as NALGO members were the employees of local authorities not of the ratepayers. The council had always refused to disclose or discuss what it did itself as an employer (*cries of "Why?"*). It believed its staff were happy with the present position, and he asked Conference to respect their wishes as delegates hoped their own employers would respect theirs. Conference, however, was determined to uphold the right of Heston and Isleworth's individual member, and adopted the motion.

#### ASSOCIATION SUBSCRIPTIONS

##### Plea for lower-paid

Next, A. DUFF, Renfrew County, formally moved a recommendation that the N.E.C., in framing new rates of subscriptions to the Association, should keep those of the lower wage groups as low as possible. To this, DR. N. STRANG, South Shields, submitted an amendment pointing out that many on low salaries were also members of their professional organisations—such as the College of Nursing—and suggesting that subscriptions of these members should be reduced, those of the higher salary groups being increased. Such a measure, Dr. Strang suggested, would, in fact, increase the Association's income. Many student nurses, trainee technicians, and other professional trainees earning small salaries and wishing, as they should, to be members of their own professional bodies, could not afford the extra £1 a year to join NALGO, and he knew of student nurses who had

left NALGO when they found what membership cost.

E. F. HEDLEY, South Shields, seconding, said that his own branch had a potential membership of 300 in the health service alone, but they found the present subscription an obstacle to recruitment, especially among probationer nurses. And if all nurses were recruited, members who went into hospital would find a fellow-member nursing them, and would thereby derive benefit from the sacrifice of subscription (*laughter*).

But representatives of the health service did not all welcome the proposal. One, MISS M. W. CURTIN, N.E.C., but speaking from the floor, vigorously resisted it. Who, she asked, were the lower-paid people in the nursing profession? They were the health visitors and the domiciliary midwives—the sister tutors and the matrons. Student nurses were students, and should be used as students. She believed that every nurse should belong to her own professional organisation and to a trade union. She was very proud to belong to NALGO, and had been able to afford it, even when she was getting £20 a year (*cheers*).

#### Dangers of differentiation

Replying for the N.E.C., J. H. ROBINSON, Honorary Treasurer, said that every reasonable person would agree with the spirit and sentiment of the motion, but if Conference passed it, he hoped that the N.E.C.—being somewhat chastened in spirit and sore in body through their past disobedience (*laughter*)—would not assume that the phrase "as low as possible" used by their Scottish friends meant one penny per annum. On the amendment, he suggested that Conference should draw a sharp distinction. Professional bodies were primarily concerned with professional knowledge and the advancement and information of their members, and only remotely, or not at all, with trade union functions. There was probably no man in the hall who had not had, in securing his present position, to sink capital—leisure and a certain amount of money—into his service life. To try to differentiate in trade union subscriptions would be administratively difficult and would produce gross inequalities (*cheers*).

Rejecting the amendment, Conference accepted the original motion, and agreed



"Chastened in spirit and sore in body."

to the withdrawal of the following motion by *Leeds Hospitals* branch suggesting that, in any revision of subscription, no increase should be made in the rates now applying to salaries up to £260.

## DISTRICT EXPENSES

### Yorkshire asks for more

Delegates then turned to a *Yorkshire district committee* motion, instructing the N.E.C. to increase the rebate due to that committee by one-half per cent. Moving this J. R. CRESSWELL complained that his district was asking for the return of the 5 per cent. rebate, which it had enjoyed until the 1946 Conference had reduced it by one-half per cent. Since then the Association had grown and the recruitment of members in the nationalised services meant additional expense for the district committee.

They wanted to carry out the public relations and education policies but, after a deficit of £150 two years ago they had been forced to retrench. They could not afford to take part in the week-end school on branch management or to run their own week-end school.

Suggesting that the motion be referred to the N.E.C., J. H. ROBINSON admitted Yorkshire's hardship, but urged that the claim should be properly considered. He accepted, however, a proposal by T. E. SMITH, *Birmingham*, that if the claim were referred to the N.E.C. it be given power to act without having to wait for next year's Conference, and delegates agreed.

## EARLIER ANNUAL REPORT

### Branches' need of information

G. MORLEY DAVIES, *Bristol*, next moved his branch's motion, incorporating an amendment by the *South Western district committee*, calling for an amendment to rule to provide that the draft of the Council's Annual Report dealing with references from the previous years' Conference should be issued to district committees and branches by February 15 each year instead of, as at present, with the Conference agenda in April. Branches, Mr. Davies argued, wanted to know what Conference was to consider before they submitted motions. At present, they put the cart before the horse, requiring branches to submit motions for Conference before they had seen the Report. Were the position reversed, the agenda would be simpler and contain fewer redundancies.

E. L. RILEY, N.E.C., intervened "unofficially" to point out to Conference that the object of publishing the Annual Report late was to give the maximum information. N.E.C. committees, meeting in July and October, referred business to the Council in September and December, but that was only half the year, and the Council continued to conduct its business from January to May. If the motion were passed, it would be possible to deal in the Report only with activities undertaken between June and say,

November, and Conference would be deprived of the information it wanted. Despite a final plea from Mr. Davies, Conference supported the N.E.C. and rejected the motion.

Turning now to the last section of the Agenda—amendments to rules—delegates heard P. H. HARROLD, honorary solicitor for England, move on behalf of the N.E.C. the deletion of Rule 82 and the substitution of the following:

"Where a claim for damages is made against a member of the Association in respect of something done by him in the course of carrying out his duties as a local government officer which involves, or appears likely to involve, his being made a defendant in a civil action, the National Executive Council may give to the member complete indemnity in respect of the defence of the action and the payment of any damages or costs awarded against him or which, with the approval of the Council, he has agreed to pay in settlement of the claim."

(Rule 82 reads: "No fines inflicted on, or damages awarded against, any member should be paid except in cases specially sanctioned by the Council.")

### "All members L.G.O.'s!"

In 1939, Mr. Harrold explained, the N.E.C. had decided to extend the legal cover offered by the Association to members on the lines laid down in the suggested new rule, and the extension had been approved by the 1940 Delegate Meeting but, though they had acted on it, the change had not been made in the rules. The motion, therefore, was merely giving effect to the 1940 decision. The *Yorkshire district committee* and *Airedale Gas and Windsor Group Hospitals* branches had tabled an amendment to delete the words "as a local government officer," but Mr. Harrold assured them that, surprising as it might seem, these words, as defined in the Association's rules, covered all members of NALGO, including employees of electricity and gas boards and the health service; therefore the amendment was unnecessary. On this assurance, the amendment was withdrawn and Conference approved the change in rule.

There was no opposition to the next motion submitted by the N.E.C., proposing minor amendments to two rules of the B. & O. Fund. Their object, H. RUSSELL explained, was to make quite sure, in the light of a recent decision of the Court of Appeal, and a statement in the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the Fund should continue to be eligible for tax exemption. Conference agreed the amendments without debate.

## EQUAL PAY ECHO

### Glasgow protest at statement

Finally, the President announced that he had received an emergency resolution from the *Glasgow* branch, reading: "That this Conference deplores the statement made on June 12 by the leader of the British delegation before the International Labour Organisation in that he not only reaffirmed the Government's own unsatisfactory attitude towards equal pay for equal work but tried to influence other

countries against the adoption of this policy."

It had long been a NALGO tradition, the President pointed out, not to debate in Conference matters with a political colour not directly associated with the agenda (*hear, hear!*). It seemed to him that this motion had some political implication and he therefore suggested that it be referred without debate to the equal pay sub-committee. With this suggestion Conference agreed.

## INDUCTION OF PRESIDENT

### A moving occasion

It was now 12.30 p.m. on the last day, and Conference, for the first time within the memory of the oldest delegate, had completed its business with a full afternoon to spare. In this happy knowledge delegates adjourned for lunch, deferring the induction of the new President to the afternoon.

This was, as always, a moving occasion, made this year more memorable by the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress of Eastbourne, Alderman and Mrs. R. J. S. Croft, who had both expressed a personal desire to attend the ceremony.

Warm cheers greeted the President when he rose to present his successor, E. L. RILEY. Mr. Riley, he said, was born at West Derby, Liverpool, in 1898 and entered the service of Liverpool Corporation as a junior in December, 1913. There, except for a period of service in the 1914-18 war, he had spent his whole career, serving in various departments until, in 1947, he was appointed the corporation's first establishment officer.

### Outstanding NALGO career

In the course of an outstanding career in NALGO, Mr. Riley had been honorary secretary of the Liverpool branch for 13 years, later becoming its vice-chairman and chairman. For many years, too, he had been chairman of the North Western and North Wales district committee, and, since 1935, had been a member of the N.E.C., serving on all its committees, and as chairman of the establishment, service conditions, and re-adaptation of Association machinery committees. He had been vice-chairman of the N.E.C. for four years, and its chairman from 1947 to 1949.

Mr. Riley had played a prominent part in the establishment of Whitley machinery in the local government service, and had sat for many years on the local government National Joint Council—being chairman of the staff side in 1946, when the Charter was adopted—and on the North Western Provincial Council. Always keenly interested in training and recruitment, he was a founder-member of the Liverpool University Course for the D.P.A., and one of the first officers of Liverpool Corporation to obtain that qualification.

It was difficult, if not impossible, to find words adequately to express Mr. Riley's

high qualities. It had been said that to know a man one must have soldiered with him. "I have soldiered with Ted Riley for a great number of years," said Mr. Young, "and in that period there has ripened between us a personal friendship such as has been so well described in the words of the poet:

*"The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
"Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel."*

The new President had been a tower of strength in the Association at all times, bringing to it not only a capacity for hard work and an infinite capacity for taking pains, but also an outlook and understanding, a shrewdness and judgment, which revealed him as a giant amongst his fellows (*cheers*).

#### "A famous fighter"

"Like you," he concluded, "I have always known Ted Riley as a famous fighter, and as one on whom you can always rely to be there when the job is at its toughest. He has other qualities. There are few, if any, who can resist the natural charm of the man (*hear, hear*). That smiling face reveals his happy nature, and the lovable qualities which he has in abundance are evident to you. His kindness, his capacity for fun, his anxiety and interest in everything, commend him to us all. In performing this office to-day, I can only wish you, Teddy Riley, a happy and useful year of service as President of NALGO."

Then, while delegates cheered, and raised their voices in singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," Mr. Young invested the new President with the badge of office, and clasped his hands, as if, it seemed, to transmit to him the waves of affection and esteem vibrating throughout the hall.

#### NEW PRESIDENT'S PLEDGE

##### Hope of "happy year"

Speaking with obvious emotion, Mr. Riley told his audience that it was some twenty-five years since he first attended a NALGO Conference. But this was not the first time he had occupied the Presidential chair. Once, long ago, when the Council was late in returning after lunch, he was unanimously elected to the chair and Conference discussed a motion that the unemployed should have mixed bathing (*laughter*).

Turning to Mrs. Riley, seated near him on the platform, Mr. Riley said that she had long been a "NALGO widow." But he hoped that, having experienced the reception they had both been given, she would now appreciate what NALGO meant to one and how it got under one's skin.

After welcoming several of the Association's past-presidents, who were on the platform, Mr. Riley said that he would try worthily to follow in their footsteps. He intended during his year of office to visit as many branches and districts as possible and would do his best to give

effect to the policy which Conference had on one or two occasions, "thrust upon the Council" (*laughter*). He could not promise them forensic ability nor any particular line of business, but he hoped that it would be what he called a "happy" year. Thinking over the past few days, it had seemed to him that an appropriate hymn for the N.E.C. in the coming year would be "Oh, God, our help in ages past." But, having listened to some very inspiring stuff from the floor, he had come to the conclusion that the proper hymn would from now onwards be "Fight the good fight" (*cheers*). "I thank you most warmly," Mr. Riley concluded, "for the very wonderful reception you have given me. I shall never forget it; and I hope that at the end of my year of office, you will be able to say, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant'" (*loud and prolonged cheers*).

#### TRIBUTE TO MR. YOUNG

##### New staff side chairman

When the applause had died down, the new President rose to invest Mr. Young with a replica of the President's badge, expressing the hope that it would remind him not only of a good Conference, but of a wonderful year of office.

"He is a very good scout, is Ernest," Mr. Riley continued, "and you are very much indebted to him for what he is going to do this year. He has taken on, as a result of our pressure, the chairmanship of the staff side of the N.J.C. If any man will take on a job of that kind, having been through the chair, and within eighteen months of retiring, I say, 'God bless him! He deserves it.'"

Again the 1,400 voices, both from platform and floor, blended in the old song, and gave three loud cheers for the past President. Thanking them, he said that during his year of office he had met with overwhelming generosity and kindness, and the spirit he had found in the branches had been rejuvenating. "I thank you for the privilege you afforded me, and I only hope my successor and his successors will feel as happy in office as my wife and I have done this year" (*prolonged cheers*).

##### General secretary's response

Mr. Riley then moved a vote of thanks to the Association's staff to which the general secretary, J. H. WARREN, replied. By long tradition, he said, the general secretary was seen and not heard at Conference, except, perhaps, in response to so kind a resolution as this, for which he thanked delegates on behalf of his staff and himself. There might be some, he added, who thought this tradition was becoming a little outworn, and others who considered that it was carried to extremes. He did not complain, however, because it had the great advantage that, though he did not know when he came to the microphone whether he would receive a bouquet or a buttonhole, at least he knew he would not receive brickbats (*laughter*).

In a few months' time he would have

been associated with NALGO for forty years—he joined one of the local guilds out of which the Association developed when he entered municipal service at the age of 15—and it was 25 years since he attended his first Conference. He had seen the faces of delegates in each successive Conference, and the experience had taught him that "plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose." New faces replaced old ones, but the new delegates retained the virtues—and the vices—of the old ones. It was inspiring to see how this great Association continually renewed itself. It was a happy augury for the future, a guarantee that its greatness, its prestige, its influence, and its success would continue (*cheers*).

##### Conference committee's part

Mr. Young then proposed votes of thanks to the Mayor and Corporation of Eastbourne, and to the local branch conference committee, especially its chairman, J. DARTNELL, and secretary, M. STEVENSON, for the very great amount of work they had put into the Conference (*cheers*), and to the Vicar of St. Mary's Church for the facilities accorded to delegates at the Conference service the previous Sunday and his inspiring sermon (*cheers*).

Readily accepting the President's invitation, the Mayor, Alderman Reg Croft, replied. It was neither NALGO practice nor was it part of the Mayor's job to attend the final session of Conference, he said, but he had made so many friends among delegates during the week that he felt impelled to gate-crash and to say "Thank you" and "Cheerio, I'll be seeing you" (*cheers*).

##### "Most pleasant task"

Lastly, Mr. Dartnell and Mr. Stevenson, whose efficient handling of all the local arrangements had set a standard rarely equalled and never excelled, came to the microphone to acknowledge the warm expression of delegates' gratitude. It had been one of the most pleasant tasks they had ever undertaken, said Mr. Dartnell, in the performance of which he had been given unstinting help by every member of his committee. They had tried to do one or two things which would make the Eastbourne Conference memorable—notably an evening steamer trip for delegates and a party for their children which had been a real success and which he commended to those who might organise future Conferences. He hoped that NALGO would return to Eastbourne and promised that, when it did, they would have a new conference hall big enough to accommodate it whatever its size.

To this, Mr. Stevenson added his own expression of thanks, on behalf of "the whole team," after which delegates joined hands for the customary full-throated singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and NALGO's thirty-third Annual Conference came to its end—with forty minutes still to spare.

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**N A L G O   C O R R E S P O N D E N C E   I N S T I T U T E**

# Charter for gas staffs

AGREEMENT was reached at a meeting of the National Joint Council for Gas Staffs held on June 28 on national scales of salaries, hours of work, overtime payments, and sick pay scheme, in respect of administrative, professional, technical and clerical staffs within the purview of the Council.

There are different scales of salary, for the Metropolitan area, Provincial A and Provincial B districts. The classification of staffs into either Provincial A or B is to be determined by the appropriate area joint council. The Metropolitan area is delineated on a map. Details of the agreement are as follows :

## SALARY SCALES

### Clerical Grades

**Grade A—rate-for-age :** Operations requiring small measure of responsibility ; working to a limited number of well-defined rules ; tasks mostly checked or closely supervised.

Age	Metropolitan		Prov. A		Prov. B	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
16	£165	£132	£135	£108	£120	£96
17	170	136	140	112	125	100
18	190	152	160	128	145	116
19	210	168	180	144	165	132
20	230	184	200	160	185	148
21	250	200	220	176	205	164
22	275	220	245	196	230	184
23	290	232	260	208	245	196
24	305	244	275	220	260	208
25	320	256	290	232	275	220

**Grade B :** Responsibilities greater than Grade A work, but still duties mainly of a routine character.

London	Prov. A		Prov. B		
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
£335	£268	£305	£244	£290	£232
350	280	320	256	305	244
365	292	335	268	320	256
380	304	350	280	335	268
395	316	365	292	350	280
415	332	385	308	370	296

**Grade C :** Independent arrangement of work calling for the exercise of initiative ; little supervision needed ; daily routine varying.

London	Prov. A		Prov. B		
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
£400	£320	£370	£296	£355	£284
415	332	385	308	370	296
430	344	400	320	385	308
445	356	415	332	400	320
460	368	430	344	415	332
470	376	440	352	425	340

**Grade D :** More important clerical and minor administrative work with a measure of control over a sequence of jobs and over groups of staff ; non-routine queries ; work requiring special knowledge or

individual responsibility without supervision.

Metropolitan	Prov. A		Prov. B		
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
£455	£364	£425	£340	£410	£328
470	376	440	352	425	340
485	388	455	364	440	352
500	400	470	376	455	364
515	412	485	388	470	376
530	424	500	400	485	388

### A. P. and T. Grades

Employees qualified by examination or experience, engaged on professional or technical work in engineering, technical, scientific, legal, or accounting departments ; also employees engaged on higher clerical and administrative work not covered by the proposed male and female salary scales (clerical) ; and certain subordinate employees engaged on technical work.

The Provincial A scale only is quoted. The Metropolitan scale is this scale plus £30 (men) and £24 (women). The Provincial B scale is this scale less £15 (men) and £12 (women).

### Grade 1—rate-for-age:

Age	Men		Women	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
16	£135	£108		
17	140	112		
18	160	128		
19	180	144		
20	200	160		

**Grade 2—Men :** £250 × 15 (8)—£370 ; Women : £200 × 12 (8)—£296.

**Grade 3—Men :** £250 × 15 (10)—£400 ; Women : £200 × 12 (10)—£320.

**Grade 4—Men :** £250 × 15 (6) × 20 (4)—£420 ; Women : £200 × 12(6) × 16(4)—£336

**Grade 5—Men :** £385 × 20 (4)—£465 ; Women : £308 × 16 (4)—£372.

**Grade 6—Men :** £415 × 20 (4)—£495 ; Women : £332 × 16 (4)—£396.

**Grade 7—Men :** £450 × 20 (4)—£530 ; Women : £360 × 16 (4)—£424.

**Grade 8—Men :** £490 × 20 (4)—£570 ; Women : £392 × 16 (4)—£456.

**Grade 9—Men :** £520 × 20 (5)—£620 ; Women : £416 × 16 (5)—£496.

**Grade 10—Men :** £570 × 25 (4)—£670 ; Women : £456 × 20 (4)—£536.

**Grade 11—Men :** £595 × 25 (5)—£720 ; Women : £476 × 20 (5)—£576.

**Grade 12—Men :** £645 × 25 (5)—£770 ; Women : £516 × 20 (5)—£616.

The salary scales shall take effect as from April 1, 1950.

## APPLICATION OF SCALES

### Clerical

I. (a) **Appointment :** The Management shall, in the first place, decide the salary and salary scale which shall apply to an employee ; and except as regards promotion from Grade A to Grade B, all appointments to a particular Grade shall be dependent upon there being a vacancy in that Grade.

(b) **Promotion :** Promotion from Grade A to Grade B shall be subject only to the issue by the Management of an efficiency certificate to the effect that the employee has capably fulfilled his or her duty in the past and appears to be capable of fulfilling the duties of the higher Grade, except that, in the case of females, where no increase in proficiency and/or experience can be shown or is required by the particular job in question, promotion shall not be automatic.

II. **Increments :** In Grade A increments are payable on the employee's birthday. In all other Grades the increments of salary specified shall be granted automatically on 1st January in each year until the maximum is reached, provided (a) that at that date he or she had six months' service at his or her existing salary, and (b) that an increment may be withheld if in the judgment of the Management his or her work and conduct are unsatisfactory. If an increment is withheld for this reason he or she shall have a right of appeal to the Management, and if his or her service subsequently becomes satisfactory, the increment may be reinstated.

III. **Safeguarding of Existing Salary Rights :** Where an employee under his or her existing conditions of service is receiving, or would progress to, a higher salary than that applicable to the grading of his or her post under this Scheme, such higher salary or progressive higher salary shall be preserved in his or her case ; otherwise the salary scales shall apply in their entirety.

IV. **Appeals :** Any question as to the rights of an employee under the salary grading Scheme shall be dealt with in the first place between the local management and the employee. If the employee is dissatisfied with the decision, or with the failure of the Management to give a decision, the matter shall be considered at a local conference of the Management and representative(s) of the employee's organisation. If no settlement is thereby reached, the question shall be referred to the appropriate Area Joint Council for Gas Staffs, as a difference to be dealt with in accordance with its constitution. Should the area council fail to reach agreement, the question shall then be referred to the National Joint Council for Gas Staffs for settlement.

V. **Special Cases :** Nothing in these provisions shall at any time prevent the Management, at their sole discretion, from increasing the salary of an employee, or from transferring him or her to a higher Grade, if thought fit.

### A. P. and T.

#### I. Appointment and Promotion

(a) The Management shall, in the first place, decide the salary scale which shall apply to an employee.

(b) With the exception of promotions from Grade I, promotions from one Grade to a higher Grade shall not be automatic.

but shall be dependent upon the ability, duties or qualifications of the individual employee, and upon there being a vacancy.

**II. Increments:** In Grade I increments are payable on the employee's birthday. In all other Grades the increments of salary specified shall be granted automatically on 1st January in each year until the maximum is reached, provided (a) that at that date he or she had six months service at his or her existing salary, and (b) that an increment may be withheld if in the judgment of the Management his or her work and conduct are unsatisfactory. If an increment is withheld for this reason he or she shall have a right of appeal to the Management, and if his or her service subsequently becomes satisfactory, the increment may be reinstated.

The provisions for safeguarding existing salary rights, appeals, and special cases in respect of A.P.T. Grades are the same as for clerical grades.

#### Hours of work

The normal working week for clerical, administrative, professional and technical staffs in the gas industry shall be one of 38 hours, except that in the case of individual staff with whom it is a condition of service that they shall normally work longer hours per week than 38, such staff shall continue to be subject to such condition of service in relation to hours.

#### Overtime

The agreement makes no provision for the payment of overtime and the working of overtime is to be discouraged. Where it is necessary to work prolonged, exceptional, or recurring periods of overtime area boards are to consider sympathetically the payment of quarterly bonuses, and an employee who has worked such periods shall be entitled to appeal under clause IV of the provisions covering the application of the salary scales where he or she is dissatisfied with any bonus payment, or the failure of the management to make such payment.

#### Sick pay scheme

While lack of space prevents our quoting the scheme in full the following are the main provisions:

**II. Qualification for Allowances:** Before becoming entitled to the Allowances under this Scheme an employee shall:

- have completed one year's continuous service, with the employing authority and its predecessors;
- submit himself (if so required) for examination by a registered medical practitioner nominated by the employing authority;
- be notified by the employing authority that he has been admitted to the Scheme.

*Provided that at the end of one year's continuous service an employee shall be admitted to the scheme, unless he had been informed within that period that he must pass a medical examination and as a result of that examination he had been*

notified in writing before the expiration of that period that he is not admitted.

**III. Scale of Allowances:** (a) An employee who is absent from duty owing to illness shall be entitled to receive:—

(i) an allowance equal to full salary for the first six months of such absence;

(ii) after the expiration of the period mentioned in sub-clause (a)(i) hereof, an allowance equal to half salary for a further period up to six months.

(b) The employing authority shall have discretionary powers to extend the application of the foregoing scale in the case of an employee who has not completed twelve months' continuous service, or where his entitlement to an allowance equal to full salary has ceased.

**IV. Calculation of Allowances:** The rate of allowance and the period for which it shall be paid in respect of any period of absence due to illness shall be ascertained by deducting from the period of benefit the aggregate of the periods of absence due to illness during the twelve months immediately preceding the first day of absence, but excluding any period of absence through injury or disability sustained by an employee in the discharge of his duty.

An employee suffering from sickness and incapacity due or attributable to:

- his own negligence or misconduct; or
- an accident not arising out of and in the course of his employment with the employing authority,

shall not be entitled to any sickness allowance under this scheme.

*Provided that the employing authority may at their discretion extend either the whole or any part of the benefits of the scheme to an employee who is not entitled to benefit under the National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act 1948.*

There shall be deducted from an allowance which is equal to full salary:

- the amount of sickness benefit payable under the National Insurance Act 1946;
- the amount of injury benefit or disablement pension payable under the National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act 1946;
- compensation payments (if any) made under the Workmen's Compensation Acts where the right to compensation arose in respect of an industrial disease or accident suffered or sustained before 5th July, 1948.

No deduction shall be made from an allowance equal to half salary unless the full benefits payable when added to half salary exceed the amount of full salary. In such cases the amount in excess of full salary shall be deducted.

**V. Conditions of Allowances:** An employee who is prevented by his illness from reporting for duty shall immediately notify the appropriate officer of the employing authority. A medical certificate indicating the nature of the illness should be submitted on the first day of the illness in order to obviate possible loss of National Insurance benefit; where, however, an employee fails to submit to the

Insurance Authorities a medical certificate covering the first day of absence, he shall not suffer a deduction from the allowance mentioned in Clause III(a)(i) above of the National Insurance benefit lost through such failure, provided that certificates be submitted to the insurance authorities and the employing authority by the third day of absence, and provided also that any insurance benefit which is received in respect of the first three days shall be deducted from the sickness allowance. Thereafter the employee shall submit medical certificates at intervals of seven days or at such longer intervals as may be decided by the employing authority. On his returning to duty the employee shall submit a medical certificate of fitness.

An employee who is absent as the result of an accident shall not be entitled to an allowance if, in the opinion of the employing authority, an action for damages would lie against a third party, or if the employee decides to take action at common law. In either event the employing authority may, having regard to the circumstances of the case, advance to the employee a sum not exceeding the sickness allowance provided under this scheme, subject to the employee undertaking to refund to the employing authority the total amount of such allowance or the proportion thereof represented in the amount of damages received. Any period of absence in such a case where a refund of the monies advanced is made in full shall not be taken into account in calculating allowances under this scheme. Where, however, the refund is made in part only the employing authority may at their discretion decide to what extent, if any, the period of absence may be so taken into account.

The employing authority may at any time require an employee who is receiving a sickness allowance to submit to an examination by a medical practitioner nominated and paid by the employing authority.

No sickness allowance shall be paid to an employee after the termination of his employment.

**VI. Sick Leave during Annual Leave:** If an employee is sick during his annual leave and submits to the appropriate officer of the employing authority at the earliest practicable date a medical certificate to that effect, the period of sickness may be reckoned as sick leave and not annual leave.

**VII. Contact with Notifiable Diseases:** Where an employee has been certified by the local medical officer of health under the provisions of the National Insurance (Unemployment and Sickness Benefit) Regulations, 1948, as a "contact" with a case of notifiable disease, and, as a result, receives National Insurance benefit the provisions of this scheme may apply.

**Date of Operation:** This scheme shall operate as from the 22nd February, 1950.

*Comments on these agreements by L.A. Garratt, the National Officer for Gas Staffs, will appear in the September issue of "L.G.S."*

# National Executive Council 1950-51

**THE RESULT** of the election of the National Executive Council for 1950-51 is as follows. New members, whose photographs are below, are marked with an asterisk.

## Eastern

A. E. NORTROP, dep. borough education officer, Luton, 4,011.

E. F. BACON, asst. education officer, Norfolk, 3,109.

H. BEWES, sen. mains clerk, Eastern Electricity Board, Luton, 2,468.

A. H. AUBERTIN, chief admin. officer, roads and bridges dept., E. Suffolk, 2,457.

## East Midland

MISS F. E. POLE, secretary to general manager, transport dept., Leicester, 4,497.

G. T. BELTON, rating and valuation officer and dep. clerk, Basford, R.D., 4,192.

R. EVANS, clerk, Blackwell R.D.C., 3,699.

J. PEPPER, establishment officer, East Midlands Electricity Board, 3,453.

## Metropolitan

A. E. ODELL, dep. town clerk, Poplar, 7,862.

L. W. G. HETHERINGTON, section head, L.E.B., S.W. sub-area, 7,003.

W. PITTS STEELE, secretary, Aldersbrook Homes, East Ham, 6,857.

T. D. BRADFORD, chief cashier, Hampshead, 6,643.

L. G. SIRETT, sen. accountancy asst., Hendon, 6,632.

J. W. EDMONDS, cler. off., P.L.A., 6,576.

W. STROTHER, borough engineer and surveyor, Bethnal Green, 6,425.

A. E. KAY, admin. asst., Essex, 6,202.

J. B. MCCANN, 1st class asst., L.C.C., 6,174



J. G. Iles (Wales)



L. G. Lambe (Met.)



O. Baxter (N.E.)



N. Hurd (N.W.)



C. B. Evans (W.M.)



V. A. Day (S.)

\*L. G. LAMBE, accounts asst., Croydon, 5,916; N.E.C. 1948/49; sec. Metropolitan wages campaign sub-committee; member, Metropolitan joint education council and S. Metropolitan district council.

R. B. WEBB, estab. off., Westminster, 5,894.

## North Eastern

F. BAINBRIDGE, committee clerk, Durham, 4,542.

J. Y. FAWCETT, cashier, S. Shields, 4,056.

A. GALLON, secretary and ch. clerk, engineer's dept., Newcastle, 3,545.

\*O. BAXTER, ch. clerk, educ. dept., Middlesbrough, 2,008; chairman N. E. educ. c'tee; member district executive c'tee, provincial council executive, and appeals panel; branch education secretary.

## North Western and North Wales

MISS M. TOWNSON, asst. in charge, welfare and records, passenger transport dept., Liverpool, 9,702.

H. MATHER, ch. cashier, water dept., Manchester, 9,340.

A. E. FITTON, district sanitary officer, Blackpool, 9,296.

J. P. PHOENIX, information officer, Liverpool, 9,204.

L. H. TAYLOR, ch. administrative asst., town clerk's dept., Salford, 8,601.

S. DUNCAN, publicity officer, Lancashire C.C., 8,420.

H. RUSSELL, secretary, N. Western Gas Board, Stockport, 6,197.

\*N. HURD, rating official, treasurer's dept., Manchester, 6,178; member N.W. district c'tee; chairman B. and O. sub-c'tee; branch treasurer; member Prestwich B.C.

W. ROWLANDS, treasurer, Rhyl, 5,706.

\*G. DIXON, commercial manager, N.W. Gas Board, Barrow-in-Furness, 5,485; member, N.W. area joint council for gas staffs; member N.W. and North Wales district committee; president and chairman, branch executive committee.

## Scottish

S. H. BRODIE, establishment officer, S.W. Scotland Electricity Board, 5,087.

N. MCLEAN, clerk, city chamberlain's dept., Glasgow, 4,557.

D. GALBRAITH, ch. cashier, finance dept., Paisley, 4,350.



A. A. Dumbrell (S.E.)



W. J. Wynn (S.E.)



C. B. Evans (W.M.)



E. Young (Yorks)

J. PENNY, ch. asst., city assessor's dept., Dundee, 4,155.

T. STEWART, ch. accountant, Inverness, 3,915.

## Southern

L. H. PALMER, sec. records clerk, Southern Electricity Board, 3,233.

W. F. APPLETON, ch. sanitary inspector, Portsmouth, 2,991.

E. R. DAVIES, dep. clerk Berkshire C.C., 2,906.

\*V. A. DAY, research officer, town planning, Oxford, 2,023; former member Southern Provincial Council, area education and district committees; branch secretary.

## HONORARY OFFICERS

The following were elected honorary officers:

President: E. L. RILEY

Vice-Presidents: E. R. DAVIES and L. BEVAN

Trustees: G. LLEWELYN, T. NOLAN and J. PEPPER

Hon. Treasurer: J. H. ROBINSON, F.I.M.T.A., F.S.A.A.

Hon. Solicitors: P. H. HARROLD (England); J. C. RENNIE (Scotland); and \*J. G. ILES (Wales). Mr. Iles entered the local government service in 1925, and was Bristol's assistant solicitor before going to Newport in 1946. He has been a member of NALGO for 25 years and serves on his branch executive.

## South Eastern

N. W. BINGHAM, sen. asst. (welfare), Kent education committee, 5,750.

A. J. PACKER, asst. div. education officer, Kent education committee, 4,703.

\*A. A. DUMBRELL, ch. clerk (licences section) and ch. cashier, treasurer's dept., East Sussex, 3,469; member South Eastern district committee; former branch chairman, and member, branch executive and local joint committee.

\*W. J. WYNN, A.R.I.B.A., D.T.P., A.M.T.P.I., principal asst. architect, Surrey, 3,245; member, branch executive.

## South Wales and Mon.

L. BEVAN, clerk and steward, Hensol Castle, M.D. Colony, 3,246.

G. LLEWELYN, ch. clerk, county treasurer's dept., Monmouthshire, 2,947.

H. W. JOHN, establishment officer, B.E.A., S. Wales division, 2,367.

## South Western

G. R. ASHTON, M.B.E., clerk and ch. financial officer, Keynsham, 3,924.

C. J. NEWMAN, O.B.E., town clerk, Exeter, 3,105.

W. W. YEATES, F.L.A., dep. city librarian, Plymouth, 2,900.

R. T. SHEARS, clerk, N. Devon Water Board, 2,536.

## West Midland

C. A. SMALLMAN, sen. welfare officer, Birmingham, 6,137.

H. R. JONES, sen. accountancy asst., Wolverhampton, 5,008.

H. N. SHRADER, ch. welfare officer, Wolverhampton, 4,992.

MISS M. W. CURTIN, matron, Moxley Hospital, 4,942.

\*C. B. EVANS, ch. clerk, estates dept., Birmingham, 4,128; member, West Midlands provincial council and district committee; branch president.

P. ASHEN, group chemist, Walsall division, West Midlands Gas Board, 3,683.

## CONFERENCE MEETINGS

## Two new examinations for promotion agreed

**FAR-REACHING** proposals for revision of the examinations system in local government, since largely agreed by the National Joint Council, were reported to, and approved by, the Conference meeting of branch education secretaries. The proposals as originally presented involved:

Early introduction of a compulsory entrance examination for all junior entrants to the service; and

Replacement of the present Promotion Examination by two examinations:

- (i) A Clerical Division Examination, the passing of which would make an officer eligible for promotion from the General to the Clerical Divisions; and
- (ii) An Administrative Examination in two stages, success at the intermediate stage giving eligibility for promotion up to Grade APT IV, and in the final stage to any point beyond APT IV.

At its meeting on July 12—after the Conference meeting—the National Joint Council decided to defer consideration of the entrance examination, but approved the remainder of the proposals. It was agreed that the new examinations should come into force next year, and that:

*The Clerical Examination* should be comparatively simple, confined to two or three papers to test suitability for promotion to the Clerical Divisions;

*The intermediate stage of the Administration Examination* should be similar in standard to the present Promotion Examination; and

*The final stage of the Administrative Examination* should be equal in standard to the professional and technical examinations taken by local government officers.

### Exemption for graduates

The N.J.C. also agreed that graduates should be exempt from the Clerical Division Examination, and from the intermediate stage of the Administrative Examination, and that the grading sub-committee should be asked to consider adding to the Clerical Division an additional grade or grades to cover officers

(Continued from page 230)

#### Yorkshire

- L. C. R. CHINN, accountancy asst., Huddersfield, 5,848.
- T. NOLAN, accountant, No. 4 sub-area Yorkshire Electricity Board, 5,370.
- F. C. CORBISLEY, ch. clerk (secretarial), treasurer's dept., York, 4,489.
- G. B. CREELAND, accounts recovery officer, Sheffield, 4,211.
- A. SMITH, ch. administrative officer, city treasurer's dept. Sheffield, 4,149.
- A. BATELY, asst. administrative officer, public health dept., Leeds, 3,679.
- E. YOUNG, B.E.M., admin. asst., Leeds (Group B) Hosp. Man. c'tee, 3,503; member, National Consultative C'tee for health services; secretary, district health services sub-committee; branch secretary.

performing executive as distinct from clerical or administrative duties.

In a statement explaining these new proposals, the Executive Committee of the National Joint Council recalled that the Charter had provided for an entrance examination on entry to the service and a promotion examination to qualify for promotion from the General Division to a higher grade. Both were regarded as the first steps in establishing a national local government service, the entrance examina-

**On this and the next three pages we report some of the sectional meetings held at Eastbourne during Conference.**

tion securing the right type of junior entrant, and the promotion examination, combined with the provision for post-entry training, improving standards of efficiency, and creating a reservoir of qualified and experienced officers eligible for promotion to the higher grades. Circumstances, however, had prevented their complete application.

The Promotion Examination was at present being used to test fitness for promotion from the General Division, and also right through the salary scales. Experience had shown that its standard was unnecessarily high for promotion to the Clerical Grades only, with the result that there were insufficient candidates for these grades, and its use for the double purpose had tended to weaken the distinction between the clerical and administrative grades.

A further statement circulated to delegates by the N.E.C. said that the staff side had told the employers that, if the proposals were adopted, it would want to consider:

- (i) The position of officers who have passed the present Promotion Examination and of long-service officers; and
- (ii) Other matters, such as revision of the list of other examinations recognised for promotion, post-entry training facilities, and the time-table for giving effect to the scheme.

The N.J.C. has since agreed that all these points shall be considered.

Presenting the scheme to the meeting, A. E. ODELL, chairman of the N.E.C. education committee, said that it was of great value, particularly since it would provide a recognised qualification in administration and thereby enhance the status of administrators in the service. Moreover, by helping to provide a better qualified service, they would strengthen the Association's claim to a better-paid service.

Subsequent speakers asked many questions on the scheme. These, with the answers given to them by Mr. Odell, A. E. NORTROP, vice chairman of the Committee, and N. W. BINGHAM, one of the N.E.C. members on the Examinations Board, included:

*Has anything been done to promote suitable examinations for officers in the nationalised industries?*—This point should be raised in area education or consultative committees, and branches should say what type of course or qualification they thought desirable.

*Would not the creation of an additional grade or grades in the Clerical Division cause discontent among officers in the lower administrative grades?*—So far, the mention of additional grades is no more than an expression of opinion: nothing has yet been agreed. It should be remembered, however, that the scheme conceives two ladders of promotion, one clerical and one administrative.

*Will the administrative examination entitle the holder to use "letters" after his name?*—That is being considered.

The meeting adopted a resolution approving the scheme in principle, subject to attention being given to the safeguarding of existing officers.

## NALGO will continue fight to represent haulage staffs

THE OPPOSITION of other trade unions to NALGO's entry into the road haulage field provoked a lively discussion at the meeting of transport staffs.

In his opening address, JOHN LANCaster, national officer for transport staffs, had recalled how, early in 1949, representatives of staffs in the road haulage industry, then in process of nationalisation, had asked the Association to admit them into membership, saying that they needed protection and considered NALGO to be the most appropriate union for them. Appreciating also that the Association was

already committed to look after its members in the passenger transport service if and when that, too, was nationalised, and understanding that the Government's intention at the time was to place both the passenger and road haulage sections of the industry under a single Road Transport Executive, the N.E.C. agreed, with the result that within a few weeks 2,500 members of the staff of road haulage undertakings had joined the Association.

Later, however, when negotiating machinery was being discussed, the other unions interested declared that they would

take no part if NALGO were permitted to represent its road haulage members and, to prevent delay in establishing the machinery for the whole industry, the Association agreed to withdraw from the preliminary meetings. It had subsequently discussed the dispute with the other unions under the auspices of the T.U.C., and further meetings were to be held.

To this, E. L. RILEY, the President-elect, added that the two unions concerned—the Transport and General Workers' Union and the Railway Clerks' Association—did not dispute NALGO's right to represent clerical and administrative staffs in road passenger transport, but maintained that it should have no concern with road haulage. In view of this attitude, there were three possible courses of action:

1. To admit that the Association had made a mistake, and withdraw;
2. To fight, notwithstanding the antagonism of the other unions, and recognising that, in the event of a fight, this antagonism might not be confined to road haulage; and
3. To seek some compromise.

The N.E.C. was itself divided on the best policy, Mr. Riley added, and would therefore welcome the views of delegates.

#### No withdrawal

J. H. WARREN, the General Secretary, said that he had been considering the possibility of seeking representation on the negotiating machinery for 18 months or so, and then agreeing to withdraw from road haulage.

Delegates, however, strongly opposed any withdrawal, A. N. HOTTER, *Kings-ton Road Haulage*, expressing the general view when he said that the staff had the right to choose which union they wished to join. They had chosen NALGO, and wanted it to fight on their behalf. To this, G. E. JONES, *Midland Red Headquarters and Birmingham Division*, added that any withdrawal now would have a bad effect on recruitment of company passenger staffs, while W. G. BRAY, *Bristol Tramways*, declared that the "war" was extending to the passenger transport field and that NALGO was "not rough enough." Eventually, a motion to adopt the General Secretary's suggestion that the Association endeavour to secure representation on the negotiating machinery for a limited period was rejected and an amendment carried urging the N.E.C. to pursue negotiations for the right of NALGO to represent road haulage staffs "to the fullest possible extent" and "irrespective of opposition by the opposing unions."

The meeting also called for early establishment of Whitley machinery for the staffs of company road passenger undertakings.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Lancaster made the following points:

*Municipal passenger transport*; improvements had been secured in the salaries of the inspectorate grades.

"Company" passenger undertakings;

Although little progress had been made in the nationalisation of the industry, recruitment had been satisfactory. NALGO's interest in this field was established and it now had more than 2,000 members on the staff of the British Electric Traction Co. alone, on whose behalf negotiations were in progress. In Scotland, where most of the undertakings had been acquired by the British Transport Commission, negotiating and appeals

machinery had been established for all grades.

*Docks and Inland Waterways*; The interim salaries agreement had been implemented and some appeals against grading had succeeded. The National Joint Council for the salaried staff of inland waterways had held its inaugural meeting in March. NALGO had proportional representation on the divisional councils now being set up.

## Electricity N.J.C. now tackling many outstanding problems

L. G. MOSER, national electricity officer, at the meeting of electricity staffs, said that, although the completion of the final salary agreement had overshadowed the year's work in the electricity field, the National Joint Council had dealt with other important matters. Some, such as the provision for increments at April 1, 1949, and the extension of the protection of higher increments due under old scales to people who had been transferred to the general clerical scale, related to the interim scheme. This would, he hoped, soon be a thing of the past, but at the time the increments were negotiated, they had benefited thousands of members.

It was only natural that omissions from the final agreement had caused more comment than its provisions, and there had been much disappointment because telephone operators, drawing office staff, and some "miscellaneous grades" had not yet been dealt with. Difficult problems of demarcation were involved here, but the staff side was now getting to grips with them.

Other important matters, including staff rates for electricity, maternity leave, and motor car allowances, had been referred to the co-ordinating committee between the N.J.C., N.J.I.C. and N.J.B. While he could not report on progress of negotiations, the committee had now met, and he hoped that agreement would soon be reached on some of these matters.

#### Return to overtime attack

The salary agreement continued the overtime provisions which had applied under the interim scheme, and there was naturally intense dissatisfaction that no payment was to be made for overtime worked by staff in grades other than the General Division. The best solution to this problem would undoubtedly be to abolish overtime except on special and infrequent occasions, but he regretted that there was no indication that such a happy state was in sight. The staff side had made it clear that the question was not settled, and they intended to return to the attack, armed with facts and figures from branches.

He emphasised that provision had been made in the agreement for any difference to be discussed first between the trade

union and the area board; if it were not settled there, it would go to the district joint council. Most appeals should be settled at that stage, but if they were not, they could go to the N.J.C. Everyone in the industry ought to be able to feel that if there was a case it would be met.

#### Post-entry training

Through the advisory machinery, recommendations on the provision of canteens, an education scheme for junior staff, and provisions for contributions by the Boards to the cost involved in obtaining qualifications, had already been issued. They were now dealing, on the educational side, with the question of the training of showroom and commercial staff. These were recommendations, and not agreements which could be enforced, but they had the backing of the National Joint Advisory Council, and those who served on the national body and on the district and local committees should leave Boards in no doubt that they expected the recommendations to be applied.

The establishment of negotiating machinery for the managerial and higher executive grades had taken time, but recommendations acceptable to the B.E.A. were now being considered by the N.E.C.

Much had been achieved in many directions, concluded Mr. Moser, but there were still problems of importance and urgency yet to be solved. In his opinion, however, the established negotiating machinery in the electricity supply industry had done more for administrative and clerical staff than any other method could possibly have achieved.

When asked why equal pay was not part of the agreement, Mr. Moser said that the Boards had originally proposed that there should not be equal pay in any of the scales. About 60 per cent. of the staff however went to the electricity authority from local authorities, where equal pay had been achieved in the A.P.T. grades, and this position had been accepted when the interim agreement was negotiated; the staff side would not therefore depart from something already established, and the Boards finally agreed that there should not be separate scales above the General Division.

However, the question of equal pay was not finally settled, and would be reviewed if Government policy changed.

Relying to a question about the negotiations for telephone operators, Mr. Moser said that, at a meeting of the negotiating committee on May 31, the Boards' members had stuck firmly to their own proposals, which the staff side would not accept, and further consideration had, therefore, to be adjourned.

Relying to S. W. FISHER, *Southern Electricity No. 1*, who asked whether any consideration had been given to incentive schemes in the negotiations for the final agreement, Mr. Moser said that the question had not been considered. The general approach had been that, with the exception of the General Division, jobs should be graded according to their individual duties and responsibilities.

In the grades for shorthand typists and private secretaries, said H. BALDWIN, *Oldham No. 3 Sub-Area Electricity*, wage was not determined by age, and a shorthand typist could get more pay than a man of equal age in the General Division. Mr. Moser replied that they could not have it both ways. "We must either eliminate our General Division," he said, "and grade every individual post according to its duties and responsibilities, or we must establish a basic minimum scale for the general run of clerks doing the general duties. Most people will agree that the present approach is the right one but, in the staff view, the present General Division, even though it is an improvement on the original proposals, and on the local government General Division, is still inadequate to maintain the standard of recruitment."

## **Health service progress : need to recruit more members**

THE NEED FOR greater recruitment of members from the national health service if NALGO was to attain the same influence there that it had in local government was stressed by G. W. PHILLIPS, organising officer for health service staffs, when he addressed the meeting of health service delegates.

Although the national economic crisis had overshadowed negotiations in the Whitley councils, Mr. Phillips continued, the staff sides had pressed forward with some claims which could not wait, and had achieved some successes, notably new salary scales for trained nursing staffs up to the rank of ward sister in general and mental hospitals, and for nurses, also up to the rank of ward sister, nursing tuberculosis and infectious diseases. After the Functional Council had failed to agree on the salaries of domiciliary nursing staffs, a dispute was referred to the Industrial Court, which gave an award in respect of district nurses with district training, the effect of which was to increase the existing scale by £40 a year at the minimum and £60 at the maximum. The Court directed that negotiations should continue for the other grades on the basis of this award, and an agreement would be issued shortly.

### **Many improvements**

In the administrative and clerical field, a greatly improved scale of salaries had been obtained for senior officers of executive councils. Reference of another dispute to the Industrial Court secured better scales than the managerial side had offered for secretaries of boards of governors of undergraduate teaching hospitals. After this award, the Administrative and Clerical Council agreed on salaries for deputy secretaries, finance officers, and supplies officers of teaching hospitals.

Although economic conditions had made it impossible to secure improvements

for the General Division and A.P.T. grades, the staff side would act as soon as circumstances allowed. Discussions were continuing on the salaries of finance and supplies officers and assistant secretaries —now to be called "hospital secretaries."

Improvements had been secured for some of the grades covered by Professional and Technical Staffs "B" Council, in which the negotiations were largely in the hands of the recognised trade unions—notably for dental technicians, medical laboratory technicians, and hospital engineers—while an Industrial Court award had improved the scales for dispensing assistants.

There had, however, been no improvements for the grades covered by the P. & T. "A" Council, on which professional organisations had a majority on the staff side. The management side had rejected staff side proposals and the Industrial Court had rejected a claim for the normal London "weighting" allowance, on the ground that such an award should not be dealt with in isolation but should accompany a general settlement on salaries. In

an attempt to secure such a settlement, the staff side had submitted proposals in respect of radiographers—who were being used as a "test case"—and the reply received would determine future action.

Perhaps the most noticeable progress had been in the development of local negotiating machinery, Mr. Phillips continued. The General Council was soon to consider a constitution for regional appeals committees, which were to deal with disputes on salaries and service conditions. Approach to a regional appeals committee would only be through an organisation represented in the Whitley machinery, and the staff sides would be nominated by the organisations responsible for initiating appeals. Machinery to deal with appeals against disciplinary action, including dismissal, was now being considered.

A constitution for hospital consultative committees had been agreed and copies had been sent to management committees. The constitution provided that membership of these committees was to be restricted to members of Whitley organisations, or other nationally recognised bodies, but this provision was to be suspended for two years, or such other period as the General Council might decide. It was only with the greatest reluctance that the staff side had agreed to this suspension, which meant that, so long as it continued, non-unionists could be elected to the committees, and it was up to NALGO members in the hospitals to minimise its effect.

### **"A difficult year"**

During the year, the Association's consultative machinery had worked well. District consultative committees had met regularly, presenting reports and transmitting the views of members to the national consultative committee, which advised and instructed the NALGO representatives on the functional councils.

"This has been a most difficult year," Mr. Phillips concluded. "The machine has not yet had a fair chance to show its value, but I am convinced that, once the economic situation improves, we shall find that it is as useful in the National Health Service as it has been in local government."

## **Warning to gas industry: "No cheeseparing on Charter"**

"IF THE NEW administration for the gas industry forgets that spirit of pride in the industry which existed in the past, and indulges in any form of cheeseparing and whittling down of the provisions of the Charter on small things that will not amount to much financially, then, in spite of all the technical efficiency and pride they take in their great efforts in the field of accountancy, they will have failed the gas industry and the nation itself." This pungent warning was given by P. ASHEN, N.E.C., one of

NALGO'S representatives on the gas staffs National Joint Council, when he opened the meeting of gas service delegates.

Addressing delegates for the first time since his appointment, L. A. GARRATT, national gas officer, said that, during the first year of nationalisation of the gas industry, the first achievement in the industrial relations field had been the setting up of the National and Area Joint Councils for Gas Staffs. Last year, the only link

between the Gas Council and the staffs, was an *ad hoc* committee composed of members of the industrial relations committee of the Gas Council and of the staff side of the old N.J.C. for gas staffs, which had been carried on until the new machinery was established.

Last December, constitutions had been agreed for the National and Area Joint Councils, covering staffs in the industry earning up to £800, and whilst these made no startling new provisions this was hardly to be expected. The N.J.C. provided a recognised means of negotiation for settlement of the terms and conditions of employment of the staff in the industry. Of its 32 members—16 on each side—seven seats were allocated to B.G.S.A., five to NALGO, and two to the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, while the other unions—T. and G.W.U. Gas Officers' Guild, Clerical and Administrative Workers' Union, Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen, Association of Scientific Workers, and Association of Supervisory Staffs, Executives, and Technicians—shared the two remaining seats, their representatives attending meetings of the staff side in a consultative capacity only. The first meeting of the N.J.C. had been held in January, and had met twice since. It established a salaries and conditions of service committee, which had devised the new holiday scheme now being operated.

#### Benefits for majority

This holiday scheme had been criticised because it did not contain a "no worse conditions" clause, but, said Mr. Garratt, "Let us examine the position fairly. If members have the impression that no attempt was made to secure the inclusion of such a clause, they have a wrong impression of the facts. The staff side agreed to the scheme because the benefit it gave to the majority outweighed the disadvantages to a comparative few, and that maxim must be followed when a national agreement is made."

During the past months, he continued, there had been protracted negotiations to try to agree national scales of salaries. [This agreement, since reached, is reported on Page 228.] He was not unduly worried about the scales themselves, Mr. Garratt continued, since, in his view, the implementation of any scales of salaries was more important than the actual scales. When the local government Charter came in, the staffs had been graded by the employers. Many gradings had been fair and reasonable, but many had not, and the appeals committees had been busy for a long time. He hoped that there would not be cause for similar action on behalf of large numbers of gas staffs, but the machinery was there and would be fully used if necessary.

One section of employees who were in the dark about their future, were the marginal grades, and he could not say much to lighten their darkness. The

employers had submitted proposals for salary scales and conditions of service to which the unions had made counter-proposals. These were now before the employers.

So far as officers earning more than £800 a year were concerned, NALGO and the Gas Officers' Guild had been invited by the Gas Council to discuss the establishment of machinery for senior officers, when it had been agreed to set up National and Area Joint Councils, and the constitutions were now being drafted.

Concluding, Mr. Garratt said he felt that the National and District Consultative Committees for the gas industry were now firmly established and serving a useful purpose.

#### Scottish officers' concern

In the discussion which followed, E. S. JOHNSTON, *Glasgow Gas*, said that gas staffs in Scotland were perturbed about the local autonomy which had been granted to the various boards, and the unilateral action which was taken on numerous occasions by the Scottish Board. For example, the scale of subsistence allowances made great differentiations according to the salaries of the officers concerned. He thought that no man going away on official business should suffer financially, and he asked the N.J.C. to make a uniform scale of subsistence allowances.

A. BLUE, *Glasgow Gas*, thought that many details in the application of national salary scales would have to be resolved at local level. He commended a draft constitution prepared by J. E. N. DAVIS, chief organisation officer and staff side secretary, which, he thought, would meet the needs of the staffs. Mr. Davis told delegates that the draft constitution had been sent to the employers, whose secretary was to discuss it with him.

#### Compensation fight fails in Parliament

DESPITE AN ALL-OUT effort by NALGO to preserve the compensation code laid down in the Local Government Act, 1933, in the series of boundary extension Bills now before Parliament, the Minister of Health has succeeded in substituting the later and less advantageous code prescribed in the Local Government (Compensation) Regulations, 1948.

As was reported in the June "L.G.S.", the Association gave evidence in support of its claim for retention of the 1933 code when the South Shields Extension Bill was before a House of Commons Committee on May 17 and won its point, the committee rejecting the 1948 code inserted by the Minister and restoring the 1933 code. When the Bill came before the full House of Commons for its Third Reading on June 28, however, the Minister insisted on reinserting the 1948 code.

NALGO had done all in its power to make its case clear, inviting every branch

to send a document explaining the position to its local Member of Parliament. During the debate, which lasted for two and a half hours, most speakers on both sides of the House supported the Association's contention that the Minister should not attempt to change the law laid down in a general Act of Parliament by the "back door method" of a Private Bill.

The main objections to the new code are that it allows no right of appeal to a central authority, with the result that individual officers whose circumstances are similar may receive widely varying compensation; that it excludes part-time officers who devote any time at all, however small, to employment outside the public service; and that, while an officer receiving compensation must accept any alternative employment offered him, if that employment terminates after two years from the award of compensation, the compensation cannot be revived.

Notwithstanding the support given by speakers for the Association's case, the pressure put upon Labour Members to support the Minister proved too strong and the new clause was incorporated by 223 votes to 138.

#### N.J.C. agrees Promotion Examination changes

MEETING IN London on July 12, the local government National Joint Council agreed:

To introduce the new Promotion Examination scheme (described on page 231) next year (subject to safeguards) and to extend the period during which local authorities may exercise discretion in its operation to June 30, 1951;

Special gradings for supervisors and assistant supervisors employed in occupational centres of the mental health service;

To set up a standing joint advisory committee to deal with salaries and service conditions of administrative and supervisory staffs other than nurses and teachers of children's homes and hostels, remand homes, approved schools, and probation homes and hostels; and

To make further amendments to paragraph 16 of the Charter concerning sickness payments.

Details are being sent to branch secretaries and will be published in the September "L.G.S."

#### N.B.S. lifts mortgage restrictions

THANKS TO an increase in investment income, the NALGO Building Society is able once again to consider granting mortgages up to 85 per cent. of the purchase price or valuation of the property mortgaged, whichever is the lower, and up to 100 per cent. of the purchase price of houses which members are now renting.

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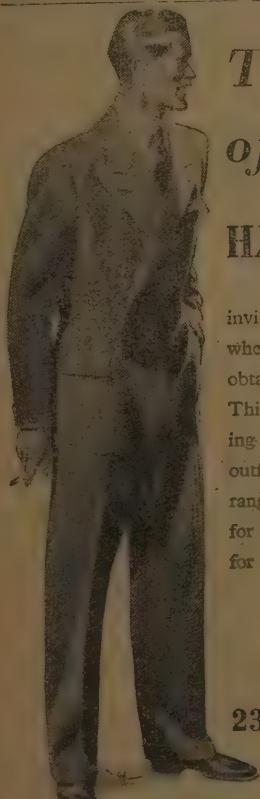
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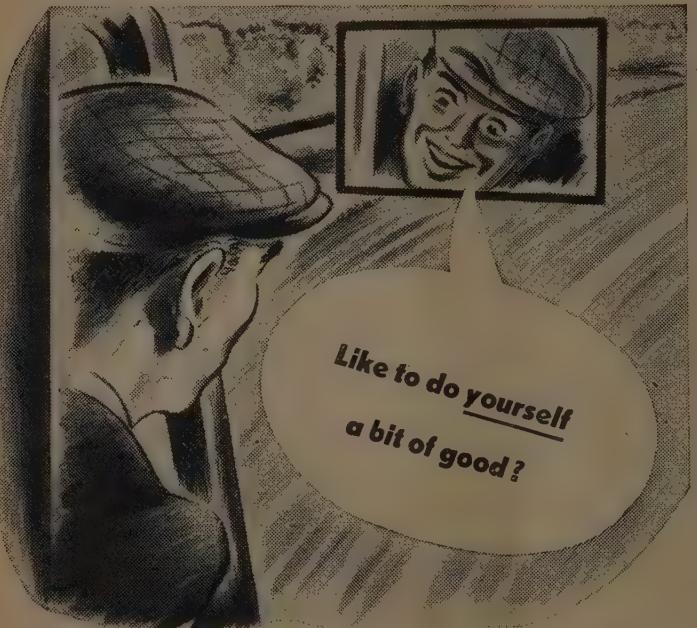
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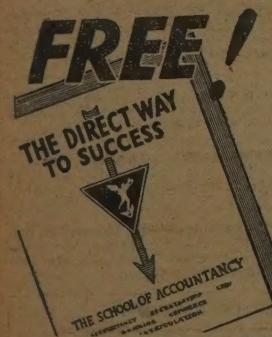
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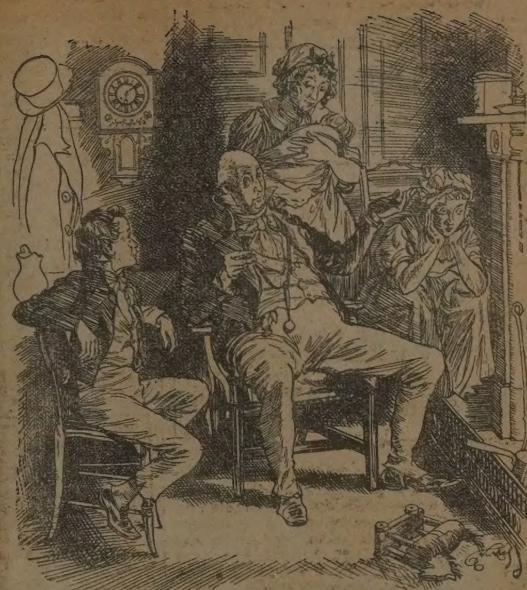
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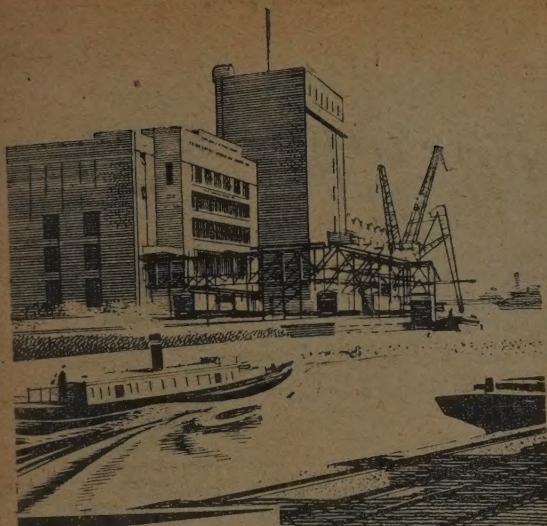
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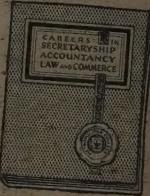
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